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No. 6, June 1982



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PERSONNEL WORK: OBJECTIVES AND FACTORS INVOLVED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 6, Jun 82 (signed to press 24 May 82) pp 3-9

[Article by 1st Deputy Chief of the Main Personnel Directorate of the USSR Ministry of Defense, Col Gen V. Goncharov: "The 26th CPSU Congress and Work with Military Personnel"]

[Text] The 26th Party Congress provided the communists and all the Soviet people with a powerful charge of creative energy for many years to come. The high forum of communists outlined the paths of further socioeconomic development for our state, for the strengthening of its defense might and for an ongoing advance along the path toward communism.

On the threshold of the significant event in our people's life, the 60th anniversary of the formation of the world's first unified multinational state of workers and peasants, the Soviet people are working with a particular upsurge of activity. The nature and scale of the tasks carried out by them determine the exceptionally high demands placed on the carrying out of personnel policy the essence of which is to maximally assist in carrying out the tasks of communist construction. The 26th Congress developed this policy further in terms of the new historical period.

The fact that at each congress the CPSU has devoted great attention to the question of personnel work is completely natural. The Leninist principles of recruitment, placement and indoctrination of the personnel lie at the basis of the party's personnel policy. Lenin pointed out that the Soviet state "should organize the question of recruiting the best workers, broadly, on a planned basis, systematically and openly..."¹ and place them in such a manner that the appointed official corresponds to the position both in terms of knowledge as well as his abilities and calling. V. I. Lenin taught that the personnel should be selected: "a) from the viewpoint of conscientiousness, b) from the political position, c) a knowledge of the job, d) administrative abilities...."²

V. I. Lenin and the party gave particularly great significance to the training and indoctrination of military personnel and they sought that the commanders and political workers thoroughly mastered advanced revolutionary theory and have high professional training. Upon Lenin's instructions, at the end of 1917, the first Moscow Revolutionary Machine Gun Command School was organized. On 14 February 1918, the People's Commissariat for Military Affairs announced

the opening of the first 13 command courses in Moscow, Petrograd, Oraniyenbaum, Tver and Kazan. They marked the start to developing the network of military schools of the Red Army.

The courses and schools trained the middle-level leadership but the Red Army also needed personnel of the senior and higher levels. Both the party and the government undertook the necessary measures to further broaden the military school network. The personnel trained by them played a major role in combating the internal and external counterrevolution as well as in the subsequent organizational development of the Soviet Armed Forces.

By the start of the Great Patriotic War, the nation already had 19 academies, 10 military faculties under the civilian VUZes, 7 higher naval schools, 203 military schools and 68 advanced training courses.³ During the period of the Great Patriotic War the party and government also showed constant concern for continuously improving the training and indoctrination system for the military personnel. As a whole, this problem was successfully resolved. The report of the Main Personnel Directorate of the USSR NKO [People's Commissariat of Defense] stated: "We completed the Patriotic War not only not having a shortage of officer personnel but also having maintained a large reserve of officer personnel of all levels...."⁴

The 26th Party Congress emphasized that under the conditions of the exacerbated international situation and the increased military danger, it was essential to show increased revolutionary vigilance, to approach the occurring political events from class positions and to assess them from the viewpoint of a patriot and internationalist. All of this increases the role of the commanders and political workers in preparing the Army and Navy personnel for defending the motherland.

Due to the purposeful and constant concern of the party and government for the military personnel, the USSR Armed Forces possess officers, generals and admirals who are totally dedicated to the CPSU and the people and who are well trained in professional terms as well as warrant officers ["praporshchik" and "michman"] capable of successfully carrying out the tasks both in peacetime as well as under the most complex conditions of a combat situation. While by the 25th CPSU Congress in the Army and Navy 51.9 percent of the officers had a higher military and special military education, by the 26th Congress these figures had noticeably increased. There was a particular increase in the number of officers, generals and admirals having a higher military and special military education. At present in the Army and Navy there are around 70 percent of them. Our officer corps has also grown noticeably younger: almost one out of two officers is under the age of 30. The Congress pointed out that at present the sons and grandsons of the heroes of the Great Patriotic War are already in the ranks of the motherland's defenders. They have not undergone the severe testing which befell their fathers and grandfathers, but are loyal to the heroic traditions of our army and our people.

The CPSU Congress, in noting the high combat qualities of the USSR Armed Forces, also set the main area of work, the essence of which is to maintain the combat potential of the Army and Navy on a proper level as this represents, as the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, Comrade L. I. Brezhnev said,

"A strong fusion of high technical equipping, military skill and undefeatable morale"⁵ of the personnel. This is the *main line and goal* of personnel work.

The party and state at no time overlooked the questions of strengthening the nation's defense might or its Armed Forces. The Army and Navy possess a sufficient amount of modern combat equipment needed for the dependable defense of the motherland against the aggressor.

No matter how well armed our army might be and no matter what equipment it possessed, this alone is not sufficient. It is possible to have the most modern weapons and a better organization of the troops, but without military personnel who are well trained and totally dedicated to the party and the people, it is difficult to count on success. For this reason, as was stated in the Decree of the CPSU Central Committee "On the 60th Anniversary of the Formation of the USSR" the party in the future will pay constant attention to the training of the personnel and to more fully utilizing their creative potential in communist construction. And since modern weapons are, as a rule, collectively employed weapons, this presupposes that all the personnel servicing them, each man, be prepared in all regards on the highest modern level and primarily as a "selfless and courageous patriot, an internationalist ready to overcome any difficulties."⁶ In these wise instructions of the congress lies the essence of that enormous ideological indoctrination which is being carried out and will be carried out with even greater tenacity by each officer.

Consequently, personnel work is the constant concern for their *Marxist-Leninist training and political tempering*. Without this it is impossible to carry out the task posed by the party of increasing the indoctrinational function of the Armed Forces.

The main role in the training and indoctrination of the soldiers, sergeants and warrant officers, in instilling in them the skills of the able use of the weapons is played by the officer corps which comprises the basis of the Army and Navy and is staffed from the best representatives of the great multinational Soviet people. For this reason, concern for their *training, the correct placement of the officers, generals and admirals and their fruitful activity* means to be concerned for the high combat readiness of the Soviet Armed Forces. And the officer personnel in fact have justified the trust put in them. This was particularly apparent in the "Zapad-81" [West-81] Exercises.

In 1981, the Army and Navy received a new detachment of VUZ graduates who excelled in high ideological loyalty and professional skill. The commanders, the political workers, the staff officers, the military engineers and rear specialists are steadily continuing to improve their knowledge, they are honing their skills of controlling the troops in exercises and drills and are achieving new heights in military and political training.

But we would not be Marxist-Leninists if we asserted that all the questions of military personnel work have already been resolved. In order to be on a level of modern needs, it is essential to further improve the qualitative composition of the personnel, their placement, to improve their skills, to better the indoctrination process and master the advanced experience of military training. Undoubtedly at the center of attention should be the demand of the 26th CPSU

Congress which permeates all personnel work at the present stage, that is, to *raise the personal responsibility of the leading workers for the clear, planned and creative execution of the set tasks.* At present, energetic measures are being taken to raise the role and influence of such a category of military personnel as the commanders of the regiments, ships and brigades. At the same time it must be pointed out that some of them make mistakes and permit failings in service and conduct. It is essential to patiently help such persons but also to strengthen the demands placed on them. One must not be all-forgiving for those leaders who are conceited, who abuse official position, who foster flatterers and sycophants or who have ceased to grow in professional and spiritual terms. The position of a leader, no matter what post he might hold, obliges him to view his actions with the exacting measure of party responsibility, to show humility, to be sensitive and attentive to others, and to set the example of high morality and the observance of the moral code of a builder of communism. In assessing the activities of the personnel and in organizing indoctrinational work with them, the military councils, commanders, political bodies, the party organizations and personnel bodies are guided by the instructions given in the Accountability Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the Congress that "our attitude to those who behave unworthily, who violate the party By-Laws and the standards of party morality, has been, is and will be uncompromising."⁷

Again and again we must stress the timeliness of the instructions of the 26th Congress that each leader, in possessing great rights, should constantly remember his great responsibility to the people who have entrusted him to lead as well as to the party and the people.

It is usually said that a measure of responsibility comes with a position. In a certain sense this is the case as the higher the position of an officer or a general, the greater his responsibility and the greater the demands placed on him. But instances are still encountered when a high position turns the head of an insufficiently mature officer. He begins to consider himself infallible, he loses control of himself and becomes separated from the masses. To promptly correct such a leader means to help the cause and also to put the person on the correct path.

Of permanent significance is the task set by the congress of mastering a Leninist style of personnel work. It is a question of developing such a style, emphasized Comrade L. I. Brezhnev at the 26th CPSU Congress, "which would organically bring together efficiency, discipline with bold initiative and entrepreneurship. Practicality and professionalism with the aspiration for great goals. A critical attitude toward shortcomings with unshakable confidence in the historical advantages of the path selected by us."⁸ The November (1981) Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee drew the attention of all the Soviet people to this again, and it pointed out that for successfully carrying out the major tasks posed by the 26th Congress in the area of communist construction, particular importance had to be given to increasing organization and professionalism and to strengthening state and labor discipline in each area of production and in all spheres of management. It is essential that the officers approach the carrying out of tasks from state positions sparing neither energy nor effort for this, it is essential that they master the necessary organizational abilities and be able to unite the military collective and lead the men. The latter is

particularly important. Unfortunately, the question must sometimes be posed of removing those leaders who, regardless of their industry, discipline and sense of responsibility, are totally unable to unite the collective to involve it in new undertakings and who rely poorly on the party and Komsomol organizations.

For example, Lt Col B. Zabiyakin served industriously. However, some of his ill-considered actions so were not in keeping with the demands of close work with the party organization and the entire military collective that senior chiefs reasonably posed the question of shifting him to a different position. This was also viewed as a failing of the personnel bodies which, without having tested out the candidate in practical work, had been in a hurry to recommend his promotion. This happens where they lack the required *reserve for appointments* the creation of which is an important task as was clearly voiced at the 26th CPSU Congress.

There is no dispute, in all the Armed Services and branches of troops, many promising generals and officers have grown up. However, there still is a good deal of formalism on the questions of organizing a reserve. Sometimes the promotion lists include candidates who are unworthy in terms of their moral and professional qualities. For example, it was wrong to include in the promotion reserve Maj V. Lysakov who did not wish to realize that an officer should serve where he was sent.

The question of improving style in the activities of the personnel, as the party forum pointed out, cannot be viewed in isolation from the *strengthening of control* over the carrying out of party directives, state plans, adopted decisions, and under army conditions, primarily the carrying out of the combat and political training plans, the orders and directives of the minister of defense and the chief of the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Army and Navy. Responsibility in its party, Leninist understanding always coexists with control. In order to control in a party or Leninist manner, it is essential to constantly know the state of affairs on the spot, not to be afraid of posing questions openly and boldly, carefully considering each alert about a problem and promptly taking measures to eliminate the shortcomings.

How profound and timely are Lenin's instructions which echoed in the Accountability Report of the CPSU Central Committee at the Congress: "The essence of party leadership...is the recruitment of people and the check on execution."⁹

In speaking about control and high *party exactingness on the personnel*, we would like to emphasize that this is incompatible with petty interference. Unfortunately, such instances are not isolated, particularly when it is a question of exercises and difficult drills. Certain senior chiefs, in essence, take over for the commanders of the units to be inspected. The officers from superior staffs actually take the decisions for them. Such superiors obviously forget that taking over at times can bring a momentary or temporary success. But it blunts a person's feeling of responsibility, it leads to a loss of initiative and gives rise to a lack of confidence in their forces and abilities among the officers who suffer this taking over or interference.

Certain comrades link the question of control only with the bringing out of shortcomings and the disclosure of oversights and failings in the activities of

one or another officer or general. However, in the course of control and inspection, the emphasis should be put primarily on the unfailing fulfillment of orders, regulations and plans, on the carrying out of the tasks of combat training, the upkeep of equipment, the indoctrination of personnel and so forth. To indoctrinate using the experience of the best, the experience of those who are in the front ranks of the competitors means to take care that the combat readiness of the units and ships corresponds to present-day requirements and is constantly growing.

Of fundamentally important significance in the work with military personnel is the congress instructions that the comrades promoted to leading work *be in the very thick of the masses* that they ascertain the needs of their subordinates not from documents but in the process of personal contact and satisfy their legitimate requests. In speaking at the 17th USSR Trade Union Congress, Comrade L. I. Brezhnev said: "Competence, a heightened feeling for the new, a close link with the masses, attention to people and a knowledge of the human soul--this is what should mark trade union work at present."¹⁰ These words said by L. I. Brezhnev apply fully to the leading military personnel of all levels.

The work experience of an officer cannot be reduced merely to the time spent in the position held. Practice shows that a graduate of a higher military school (and at present nearly all of them are higher ones) usually finds it enough to spend 2 years in the command of a platoon, then the same period of time with a company, and 2 or 3 years with a battalion to obtain good practical experience. But 3 years is not enough in the position of regimental commander to acquire the skills of a mature leader. This is explained primarily by the fact that all the elements comprising the combat readiness of the troops are strengthened and brought together primarily in the regiment, on a ship or in a brigade. Here the commander gains experience in the comprehensive execution of the diverse obligations set down by the Internal Service Regulations. This is particularly important at present when the amount of work has noticeably increased for the regimental commanders, the tasks carried out by them have become more complex, and increased demands are made on their political maturity and professional preparedness and their ability to carry out combat tasks.

For this reason, the question of indoctrinating the regimental commanders and their development has assumed a special place in the work with military personnel. The problem is that their development occurs differently and over different periods. The first year is particularly crucial. It is precisely in this period that most work must be done with them individually. High party qualities must be shaped, a Leninist style in work must be instilled, one must learn to determine the main thing in one's activities, to clearly plan working time, to prepare and conduct exercises, to organize commander training of officer personnel and so forth.

It must be said that a majority of the senior chiefs proceed precisely in this manner. This has been noted in the Belorussian, Moscow and Carpathian military districts and in other formations and field forces. However, there still are many unutilized reserves for improving work with this category of military personnel. Certain senior chiefs have little knowledge of the regimental commanders and at times replace their political and military indoctrination with naked bureaucratic procedures and particularly by punishments.

As before, there is the urgent and crucial question of improving *individual work with the officers* including with the regimental commanders. Every opportunity must be ably employed for the growth and improvement of the personnel, acting here in an energetic and offensive manner as the 26th Party Congress has demanded.

Of great importance for carrying out the major and responsible tasks posed by the 26th CPSU Congress for the Armed Forces is the unswerving observance of one of the most important principles of party personnel policy, the *combining of experienced and young personnel*, the essence of which is the promoting of young, promising workers along with a considerate attitude toward experienced personnel and a maximum use of their rich experience and profound knowledge.

We must not underestimate the importance of the all-round use of the experience of active participants in the Great Patriotic War.

"The party teaches us, the military," pointed out the Minister of Defense Marshal D. F. Ustinov, "to utilize the experience of the war constantly and purposefully.... Only on the basis of the all-round analysis of the relationship of events of the past and the present is it possible to establish the dialectical succession in military affairs and on this basis to creatively improve them and raise them to a new qualitative level."¹¹ We must be responsive to the experience of those officers, generals and admirals who in peacetime as well, in performing important and responsible command assignments, evidence high moral and combat qualities, steadfastness, restraint, decisiveness and initiative.

Of great importance for vitalizing all work with military personnel is the *certification of the officer personnel*, the essence of which is to raise the activity of each officer, general and admiral, to objectively assess their political, moral and professional qualities and place them appropriately. The corresponding guiding documents are available for this. However, we would like to emphasize the following. Certification must not be viewed merely as a process consisting of the preparation and drawing up of recommendations for the officers, generals and admirals. This is an important element but not the basic one.

The main thing is to strengthen individual work with subordinate officers, generals and admirals and to profoundly study their moral and professional qualities in practical activities, that is, in the course of exercises, drills, cruises, flights, in a word, where the bases of high readiness among the units and ships are established and improved.

Certification should become a powerful incentive for each officer, general and admiral to best carry out his party and service duty to the motherland, the party and the people. It is also very important not only to correctly determine the area for each officer and his conformity to the position held, but also to actively and purposefully seek to implement the recommendation conclusions. Things must be so organized that the officers see that certification is not a formality but rather a guideline and document which for years determines where and in what capacity the person being certified is best employed.

In speaking at the 19th Komsomol Congress, Comrade L. I. Brezhnev recalled the words of V. I. Lenin that as cautiously and patiently as possible it is essential to test out and identify the real organizers, persons with a clear mind and practical boldness, persons who bring together a dedication to socialism and an ability without making a lot of noise (and even in spite of noise) to organize strong and close joint work by a large number of persons within the Soviet organization. *Only* such persons, after repeated testing, in moving them from simple tasks to the most difficult ones, must be promoted to responsible positions.¹²

Closely united around our Communist Party, its Central Committee headed by the true perpetuator of the great Leninist cause, Comrade L. I. Brezhnev, the military, like all the Soviet people, are preparing to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the formation of the USSR with new successes in improving their skills. A vivid expression of the high patriotic feelings of the defenders of the motherland was the initiative of the personnel of the leading units and the crew of the nuclear missile submarine who appealed to all the Army and Navy servicemen to join actively in a socialist competition to properly celebrate the 60th anniversary of the formation of the USSR under the motto "The Peaceful Labor of the Soviet People Must be Securely Defended!" This appeal, approved by the USSR Ministry of Defense and the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Army and Navy, has been supported by all the personnel of our Armed Forces.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ V. I. Lenin, PSS [Complete Collected Works], Vol 43, p 280.
- ² Ibid., Vol 53, p 97.
- ³ "Partiya i Armiya" [The Party and Army], Moscow, Politizdat, 1980, p 162.
- ⁴ Quoted from the book "V. I. Lenin i Sovetskiye Vooruzhenyye Sily" [V. I. Lenin and the Soviet Armed Forces], Voenizdat, 1980, p 352.
- ⁵ "Materialy XXVI s"yezda KPSS" [Materials of the 26th CPSU Congress], Moscow, Politizdat, 1981, p 66.
- ⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷ Ibid., p 68.
- ⁸ Ibid., p 51.
- ⁹ Ibid., p 71.
- ¹⁰ PRAVDA, 17 March 1982.
- ¹¹ D. F. Ustinov, "Izbrannyye rechi i stat'i" [Selected Speeches and Articles], Moscow, Politizdat, p 389.
- ¹² PRAVDA, 19 May 1982.

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WARTIME EXPERIENCE: BREAKTHROUGH TACTICS OF TANK TROOPS

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[Article published under the heading "Soviet Art of Warfare in the Great Patriotic War" by Docent and Candidate of Historical Sciences, Maj Gen A. Maryshev: "Tank Troop Operations in Breaking Through Enemy Defenses"]

[Text] During the Great Patriotic War, particularly in its second and third periods, the offensive operations conducted by the Soviet Army usually started with the breakthrough of the previously prepared enemy defenses. This was the most important and difficult task, the essence of which consisted in breaking through the defensive lines, forming breaches and breaks in the solid enemy defensive front and creating conditions for committing to the engagement the echelons for exploiting the success and for conducting fluid combat operations. The breakthrough was viewed as a means for defeating the enemy defending groups by making frontal strikes under conditions when it was impossible to envelop them from the flanks and rear.

By the start of the Great Patriotic War the questions of breaking through defenses, and particularly using tanks in this, had been worked out rather completely.¹

However, the correct theoretical views on the employment of tanks in practice could not be immediately implemented. The problem was that in 1940, the massed formation of the mechanized corps was starting and this required a significant number of combat vehicles. All the tank battalions of rifle divisions and a majority of the tank units and formations of the RGK [High Command Reserve] were employed for this purpose. For this reason the Soviet Army entered the war having virtually no tank formations which could be employed for close infantry support. The creation of the mechanized corps could not be completed due to the lack of tanks as well as command personnel. Moreover, with the outbreak of war, these formations in the difficult battles against the Nazis lost a larger portion of the tanks and in July-August 1941, they were broken up.² All of this, naturally, greatly impeded the breaking through of enemy defenses. The first weeks of the war showed that the rifle troops without a sufficient reinforcing with tanks were unable to quickly crush the enemy defenses and rapidly develop an offensive to a great depth. For this reason, from the middle of July 1941, with the start of breaking up the mechanized corps, individual tank units and formations began to be organized for operating together with the infantry.³

However, as before tanks were in extreme short supply and this was the main factor impeding the conduct of offensive operations at a rapid pace and to a great depth. Moreover, in the first period of the war, due to a lack of experience, there were major miscalculations in the combat employment of tanks. The basic ones were: an even distribution of tanks along the entire zone of advance; shortcomings in their cooperation with the infantry, artillery and combat engineers; poor artillery support; insufficient maneuvering on the battlefield; a penchant for frontal attacks; the diverting of the tanks from their basic task of neutralizing and destroying the infantry and its weapons and the use of tanks for countering the enemy artillery and tanks which by the regulations should have been the job of the artillery.

The experience of employing tanks in the breaking through of enemy defenses during operations of the first period of the war (Klin-Solnechnogorsk, Yelets, Tikhvin, the Kharkov engagement and others) was generalized in an order of the People's Commissar of Defense [NKO] of 16 October 1942 and in other documents. Of particularly important significance was the order of the NKO of 16 October 1942⁴ which outlined the shortcomings in the use of combat vehicles and outlined the major demands for their employment. In particular, it emphasized that the individual tank regiments and brigades are a means of the army commander and should be employed on a centralized basis in the main sectors as NPP tanks. The basic task of the NPP tanks was to destroy the enemy infantry (they should attack the enemy at a maximum speed, maneuver boldly, employing terrain to reach the enemy flank and rear).

Close support for the rifle troops in breaking through defenses was provided by the individual tank brigades, regiments and battalions as well as the self-propelled artillery regiments and battalions which were assigned to rifle divisions. During the period of breaking through the tactical defensive zone, NPP tank groups were organized from them. The composition of such groups during the course of the war was constantly increased with the rise in the number of tanks and the increased strength of enemy defenses. Thus, while in the Stalin-grad counteroffensive the tank groups of the 63d, 74th and 293d rifle divisions of the 21st Army included 20-22 tanks each, the density of which was only 4-7 units of armor per kilometer in breakthrough areas that were 3-4 km wide, in the Berlin Operation, in the first-echelon rifle formations of the 5th Assault Army, the NPP tank groups had from 20 to 65 tanks and from 12 to 50 self-propelled artillery mounts [SAU]. This made it possible to create a density of tanks and SAU which comprised 30-70 units of armor per kilometer in breakthrough areas that were 1-1.5 km wide.⁵

During the war there was also a constant rise in the quality of the NPP tank groups. Gradually the light tanks began to be excluded and the number of heavy ones and self-propelled artillery constantly increased. Thus, in the third period of the war the NPP tank group attached to a rifle division usually included a tank brigade (65 tanks) and a self-propelled artillery regiment (21 SAU) or 1 or 2 tank and self-propelled artillery regiments reinforced with minesweeping tanks.⁶

The increased number of tanks as part of the NPP tank groups and the narrowing of the breakthrough areas for the rifle divisions from 3-4 to 1.5-2 km helped

in significantly increasing the densities of the combat vehicles. During operations in the third period of the war, these reached 25-30 and more units of armor per kilometer of breakthrough area.

In the course of the war, the art of the combat employment of the NPP tank groups continuously developed. In conducting offensive operations up to 1942, their tanks were usually employed in a decentralized manner. Platoon-by-platoon or company-by-company they were attached to the rifle regiments and battalions advancing not only in the first but also in the second echelon. Such a breaking up of the individual tank battalions and brigades (particularly with the lack of experience among the commanders of the rifle subunits and units in their combat employment) did not make it possible to achieve great effectiveness and told negatively on the breaking through of the defenses. For this reason, in the operations of 1942-1943 (the counteroffensive at Stalingrad, the Belgorod-Kharkhov Operation and others), the tank brigades and the tank and self-propelled artillery regiments which were part of the NPP tank groups were employed, as a rule, at full strength. The regulations and instructions issued in 1942-1943 prohibited their splitting up. Here the NPP tanks operated together with the rifle troops which were directly attacking the enemy.

However, the continuous rise in the strength of enemy defenses required an even greater saturating of the rifle troops with tanks as well as an improvement in their cooperation with the rifle troops and other branches of troops. For this reason, from the second half of 1944, the commanders of rifle divisions began to attach the tank and self-propelled artillery units and subunits (from the NPP tank groups of the formations) to rifle regiments and sometimes (in breaking through particularly strong defenses) to the rifle battalions. Here the tank platoons were assigned to rifle companies and individual tanks were attached to rifle platoons. While in 1941-1943, such a splitting up of the tank formations and units (due to the shortage of tanks and the lack of experience in employing them) was harmful, subsequently the quantitative and qualitative growth of the tank fleet and the acquired combat experience made it possible with decentralized employment of the NPP tanks to achieve a great effect. Such employment of the NPP tanks contributed to the better interaction of all the men and equipment conducting the breakthrough. The commanders of the rifle units and subunits personally gave the tasks to the NPP tanks and more specifically coordinated their actions with the other branches of troops. They also controlled them in the course of battle. For example, NPP tanks were employed in the rifle divisions of the 2d Assault Army in the East Prussian Offensive Operation in January 1945. However, the decentralized employment of the NPP tanks at the end of the war was not an obligatory demand. If an insufficiently strong defense had to be broken, then the commanders of the divisions employed the tank groups for supporting rifle regiments, proceeding from the situational conditions.

The basic work in the area of the direct preparation of the tank units and formations for combat operations was conducted in the concentration areas which were 10-15 km behind the forward edge where the tanks arrived 1 or 2 days before the start of the offensive. Here the tank troops received their specific missions, cooperation was organized within the NPP tank groups and with the subunits and units of the other branches of troops and reconnaissance of the enemy and terrain was conducted. Very often joint tactical exercises were conducted during this period in which the questions of cooperation were worked out.

During the night prior to an offensive or in the period of artillery softening up, the NPP tank groups usually took up their jump-off positions some 1-3 km away from the forward edge of enemy defenses.

The battle formation of a tank group in breaking through enemy defenses in each individual instance depended upon its composition, the nature of the defenses and the terrain conditions. If the enemy defenses were shallow and little saturated with antitank weapons and the terrain convenient for tank operations, then the attack by the NPP tank group was ordinarily carried out in a single-echelon formation but with two battle lines. In the first line advanced the tanks and in the second (some 200-300 m apart) the SAU. The minesweeping tanks operated in front of the first combat line.⁷ Here the positive feature was that a maximum number of tanks and SAU participated in the breakthrough from its very start. However, such a battle formation did not make it possible to increase the strength of the tank attack in the course of the offensive.

In breaking through a deep, multiple-line and strong defense, the battle formation of the tank group consisted of two or three combat echelons. The minesweeping tanks operated ahead of it. Behind them a distance of 100-150 m advanced the tanks of the first combat echelon which consisted (depending upon the composition of the tank group) of medium or heavy tanks and had one or two lines. With two lines, the tanks in the second of them advanced 200-300 m behind the combat vehicles of the first one. The basic task of the first echelon was to destroy the infantry and its weapons and support the operations of the minesweeping tanks.

A distance of 200-300 m behind the first combat echelon came the second one which included subunits of medium or heavy tanks (SAU). In certain instances it consisted completely of self-propelled artillery. In cooperating closely with the first one, the second echelon led the attacking rifle battalions. Later, some 200-300 m behind, advanced the reserve consisting of a motorized rifle battalion of the tank brigade. It was reinforced with tanks and SAU. The overall depth of the battle formation for a tank group reached 1 km. Such a configuration of the tank groups made it possible to increase the effort from the rear. However, combat practice showed that this battle formation also had substantial shortcomings. When necessary it did not make it possible to involve a maximum number of tanks in the initial strike. Moreover, the distances between the battle echelons of 200-400 m seriously impeded the fire coordination among the tanks and SAU advancing in the different echelons. The experience of the operations conducted in the second half of 1944 and in 1945 showed that in maintaining deep echeloning of the tanks, a tendency appeared for reducing the distances between the combat echelons and for increasing the number of combat lines in each echelon.

In the course of the Great Patriotic War it was established that for supporting the maneuvers of tanks on the battlefield and for achieving high firing effectiveness from the tank weapons, the intervals between the tanks should be 25-50 m and the distances between the attacking lines of tanks and between the tanks and SAU should be 150-200 m. Smaller intervals between the tanks impeded their maneuver and this inevitably led to increased losses from enemy fire. In increasing the distances between the attacking lines, cooperation between the tanks and infantry was disrupted and reciprocal fire support of the tanks and SAU became difficult.

The operations of the NPP tanks in breaking through enemy defenses had the nature of a methodical advance from line to line.

The NPP tank groups ordinarily advanced together with the rifle divisions to the depth of the first (main) defensive zone.

After carrying out this task, the NPP tank and self-propelled artillery units and formations were removed from the rifle divisions and incorporated in the divisional, corps and army forward detachments set out in the aim of rapidly reaching the second zone, capturing major objectives in it and creating conditions for capturing it by the main forces without a halt. However, this entailed great organizational difficulties and was not always carried out.

The experience of the Great Patriotic War shows that in order for the rifle formations to be able to rapidly break through the tactical zone of enemy defenses, they had to be reinforced with NPP tanks calculating 40-50 units of armor per kilometer of breakthrough area. Ordinarily it was not possible to create such densities from the tanks and SAU of the individual tank battalions, brigades and regiments. In a majority of operations during the second and third periods of the war, the density of NPP tanks did not exceed 20-25 units of armor per kilometer of breakthrough area. This often forced the commanders of the fronts and armies, with permission from Hq SHC [Headquarters Supreme High Command], to involve tanks of the individual tank (mechanized) corps and even tank armies in breaking through the tactical defensive zone and employ them as NPP tanks. For example, in the Stalingrad counteroffensive (November 1942), a portion of the tanks from the separate tank and mechanized corps (a tank regiment from the XIII Mechanized Corps, two tank regiments from the IV Mechanized Corps and a tank brigade from the XXVI Tank Corps) which comprised the echelons for exploiting the success (mobile groups) of the combined-arms armies, from the very outset of the breakthrough were used for close infantry support.⁸ Another example. When in preparing for the Zhitomir-Berdichev Operation (December 1943--January 1944) it was discovered that in the sector of the main thrust the density of the NPP tanks did not exceed eight units per kilometer in the breakthrough area in the zone of the 18th Army of the First Ukrainian Front, the commander of the front, with permission from Hq SHC, assigned to the commander of the field force one tank brigade from the 3d Guards Tank Army. The tanks of this formation from the very outset of the offensive were used as NPP tanks and broke through the defenses together with the 129th Guards Rifle Division.

After the breaking through of the tactical defensive zone, it was envisaged that the separate tank and mechanized corps (the echelons for exploiting success in the combined-arms armies) and the tank armies (the echelons for exploiting the success of the fronts) would be committed to battle. These formations and field forces in cooperation with aviation, not being drawn into heavy, extended battles against the enemy, crushed its reserves, captured major objectives on the defensive lines, rapidly pursued the retreating enemy and thereby created favorable conditions for advancing at a rapid pace and for crossing the subsequent defensive lines with the main forces of the front (army) without a halt and for successful operations in the operational depth. For example, the committing of the 1st Guards Tank Army in the Lwow-Sandomierz Operation, the 2d Guards Tank Army in the Vistula-Oder Operation and the 6th Tank Army in the

Iasi-Kishinev Operation to a "clean" breach was a major condition for achieving success in these operations.

However, the lack of NPP tanks often forced the commanders to involve the echelons for exploiting success in completing the breakthrough of the tactical defensive zone. Here, as an analysis of the offensive operations indicates, the separate tank and mechanized corps were more often employed for completing the breakthrough of the first (main) zone. The tank armies partially and sometimes completely were committed to battle either for breaking through the entire second zone without a halt or for completing its breakthrough.

The involvement of individual tank and mechanized corps and tank armies in breaking through heavily reinforced defensive lines naturally led to significant tank losses and this told negatively on their actions to exploit the tactical success into an operational one. Without any doubt the commanders realized this, but resorted to such employment of the formations and field forces of armored and mechanized troops only in those instances when there was no other way and means for maintaining a high pace of breakthrough and when the threat arose of failing to carry out the operation's plan.

Sometimes the commanders of fronts committed tank armies to an engagement to a depth of 6-8 km. They did this when the initial attack was so strong that the enemy either was unable to resist strongly on the second line or intentionally began to pull back troops from the tactical zone to the subsequent defensive lines. Under these conditions it was essential to immediately increase the rate of advance, to beat the enemy in reaching the previously prepared defensive lines, to crush its reserves piecemeal and create conditions for the successful advance of the main forces.

For example, in the Berlin Offensive Operation, the 3d and 4th Guards Tank Armies of the First Ukrainian Front were committed to battle to a depth of 5-7 km with the task of rapidly developing the offensive since the enemy at the very outset had suffered great losses and was unable to resist strongly. The tank field forces without tangible losses quickly crossed the second line, they were separated by a significant depth from the combined-arms armies and successfully carried out the set mission.

The involving of tank armies in breaking through the tactical defensive zone was sometimes necessitated by the insufficient battleworthiness of the rifle formations or by the lack of the necessary time to ready them for an offensive. Thus, in the Zhitomir-Berdichev Operation of the First Ukrainian Front, due to the lack of time for preparations, the poor strength of the rifle divisions after intense battles and the insufficient density of NPP tanks (eight-nine units per kilometer of breakthrough area), the 1st and 3d Guards Tank Armies (the echelon for exploiting the success of the front) were committed to battle to a depth of 3-5 km, that is, during the period of breaking through the main defensive zone.⁹ For these same reasons, the 5th Guards Tank Army was committed to battle to a depth of 2-4 km in the Kirovograd Operation (January 1944),¹⁰ the 2d and 5th Guards Tank Armies in the Uman-Botosani Operation (March-April 1944) and in certain others.

In the course of the Great Patriotic War there were instances when, in the aim of achieving a high breakthrough pace, the tank armies advanced in the first echelon of the front and independently broke through the enemy defenses. Such employment of tank field forces was usually caused by the situational features and by the nature of enemy defenses. For example, in the Korsun-Shevchenkivskiy Operation, the employment of the 6th Tank Army in the first echelon made it possible to make a powerful initial thrust, to rapidly break through the insufficiently strong defenses, to link up with the 5th Guards Tank Army of the Second Ukrainian Front and encircle the enemy.

The 6th Guards Tank Army successfully broke through enemy defenses in advancing in the front's first echelon in the Debrecen, Budapest and Khingan-Mukden Operations.¹¹

The experience of the combat employment of tank armies in the first echelon of a front during the war years shows that they were employed thus only in breaking through a relatively weak defense.

Thus, during the period of the Great Patriotic War, the tank troops traveled a great and complex path of development. They legitimately were turned into the main strike force of the ground troops and were one of the major factors in increasing the depth of offensive operations and increasing the troop rate of advance.

The success in their combat employment in breaking through enemy defenses depended largely upon artillery and air support and the quality and quantity of these increased constantly.

In the effective employment of tank troops in breaking through enemy defenses, an important role was played by engineer support which consisted primarily in making passages through mixed minefields.

The organizational structure of the tank units and formations assigned for NPP, as elaborated at the eve of the war and at its very outset, as a whole contributed to their effective employment in breaking through enemy defenses. However, the lack of TOE tank battalions in the rifle formations forced them to resort to a partial shifting of the tank and self-propelled artillery formations and units from some divisions to others. As a result, cooperation became more difficult and much time was needed for joint combat teamwork. The second shortcoming was that the commanders of rifle divisions actually did not bear constant responsibility for the combat readiness of the tank units. These shortcomings were eliminated after the war by including the tanks and SAU in the TOE of the rifle divisions and regiments.

During the war years the most important trends in the development of the organizational structure of the NPP tank subunits and units were the incorporation of the self-propelled artillery as part of the NPP tank groups and the increase in the proportional amount of heavy and medium tanks in them.

The basic directions for developing the employment of NPP tanks were: increasing the density of tanks and SAU from 5-15 to 30-40 units per kilometer of breakthrough area; creating NPP tank groups not only in the first but also the

second echelons of the rifle formations; a gradual transition to decentralizing command of the small NPP tank subunits in maintaining the principle of their massed employment.

As a whole, the combat experience acquired by the tank troops during the last war in breaking through defenses was extremely diverse. A knowledge and skillful employment of it can be of help in successfully developing the theory and practice of the organizational development and combat employment of the tank troops under present-day conditions.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ For more detail on this see: VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 6, 1962, pp 19-20.
- ² "Sovetskiye tankovyye voyska 1941-1945" [The Soviet Tank Troops, 1941-1945], Voenizdat, 1973, p 33.
- ³ A. I. Radziyevskiy, "Tankovyy udar" [Tank Attack], Voenizdat, 1977, p 16.
- ⁴ For more detail see: VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 10, 1974, pp 68-73.
- ⁵ "Stroitel'stvo i boyevoye primeneniye sovetskikh tankovykh voysk v gody Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny" [The Organizational Development and Combat Employment of the Soviet Tank Troops During the Years of the Great Patriotic War], Voenizdat, 1979, pp 102, 105.
- ⁶ Ibid., p 105.
- ⁷ Ibid., p 108.
- ⁸ Ibid., p 101.
- ⁹ A. I. Radziyevskiy, op. cit., p 115.
- ¹⁰ TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 299, inv. 76784, file 1, sheet 6.
- ¹¹ VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 3, 1981, pp 66-69.

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WARTIME OPERATIONS: RIFLE DIVISION RECONNAISSANCE IN FORCE

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 6, Jun 82 (signed to press 24 May 82) pp 17-22

[Article published under the heading "The Soviet Art of Warfare in the Great Patriotic War" by Maj Gen (Res) A. Nikitan*: "Combat of the 336th Rifle Division Northwest of Mtsensk in June 1943"]

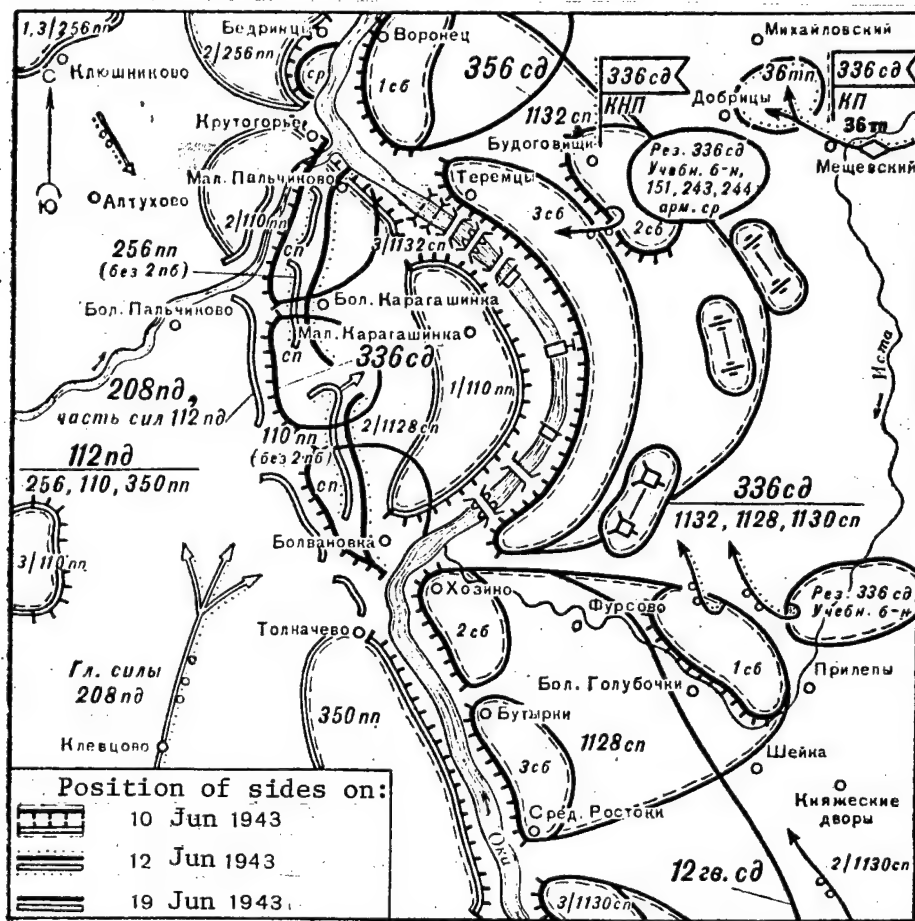
[Text] During the period of relative calm along the entire enormous Soviet-German Front when the sides were preparing for the engagements on the Orel-Kursk bulge and in the summaries of the Soviet Information Bureau each day it was stated that "no substantial changes occurred on the front," on individual sectors substantial attacks were made against the enemy in battles of local significance. One such battle was conducted by units of the 336th Rifle Division of the 61st Army on the Bryansk Front.

With the going over to the defensive along the Oka River in March 1943, in the 336th Rifle Division (the 1128th, the 1130th and 1132d Rifle Regiments, the 909th Artillery Regiment, the 254th Separate Antitank Battalion, the 408th orr [expansion unknown], the 478th osapb [expansion unknown], the 797th Separate Signals Battalion and the 431st Separate Medical-Sanitation Battalion), engineer work was being carried out on a broad front. In the 35-km defensive zone of our formation, by the end of May more than 100 km of trenches and communications trenches had been dug, several hundred dugouts and shelters had been built and over 20,000 antitank mines laid. At the same time, the units were preparing for offensive engagements. For these purposes intense active reconnaissance of the enemy was carried out. The personnel in the second echelons of the regiments was trained in the procedures and methods of actions in offensive combat.

It was established that in the zone of the division units of the enemy's 112th Infantry Division were on the defensive. A solid trench ran along its forward edge with many equipped firing pits as well as open and covered areas for machine guns and antitank weapons. In front of it ran two or three lines of

* The author of the article during the described period was the chief of the operations section of the staff of the 336th Rifle Division.--Editors.

lage of Teremtsy (see the diagram) some 1.2-1.5 m deep.¹



The Course of Combat Operations to Capture the Karagashinka Bridgehead in June 1943

However, in having these data, the command of the division and the units did not sufficiently know the enemy fire plan or the locations of its command and observations posts and also remained uncertain of the reserves and their purpose. The main thing was it was essential as quickly as possible to determine how the river could be crossed in the event of going over to the offensive if the opposite bank was defended by troops in engineer-prepared positions. The division's units did not have experience in carrying out such tasks.

In mid-May we were visited by a representative of Hq SHC, Mar SU A. M. Vasilevskiy. He was interested in the most minute details of the battleworthiness of the units, their logistical support and preparations for coming battles. The

marshal approved a proposal by the division's commander, Maj Gen V. S. Kuznetsov, to conduct reconnaissance in force and issued instructions to the army commander, Lt Gen P. A. Belov, to reinforce the formation with army resources and to ready the main forces for broadening and holding the bridgehead which was to be captured by the reconnaissance forces.

For conducting reconnaissance in force, Gen P. A. Belov by 25 May had reinforced the division with the 554th and 397th Light Artillery Regiments and the 348th, 347th and 284th Mortar Regiments, two battalions of guards mortars [rockets], and the 244th, 243d and 151st Army Rifle Companies of 200-250 men each.

With the receiving of reinforcements, the division began preparations for the forthcoming combat operations. For this, 8-12 km behind the forward edge, in the region of the population points of Bolshiye Golubochki and Prilepy on the Ista River, under the leadership of the deputy divisional commander, Col I. I. Petukhov, a divisional training center was established for training the personnel in the methods and procedures for crossing the water obstacle at night. The water level in the river by means of an earthen dam was raised to 2.5 m and its width in this area increased to 40-50 m. The divisional staff (the chief, Lt Col V. S. Kryukov) began to work out the plan for reconnaissance in force and this was approved by the army commander on 1 June.² In brief, it came down to the following.

In the first place, the crossing of the river was to be carried out at night, and at dawn, after a 10-minute intense artillery shelling, with a rush attack the first battalion of the 110th infantry regiment was to be wiped out and a line established between Maloye Palchikovo and Bolshaya Karagashinka and Bolvanovka, creating a bridgehead 3.5-4 km along the front and 2.5-3 km in depth. Prisoners were to be taken, the fire plan of enemy defenses and their engineer-design structures would be ascertained along with the position, composition and nature of operations of the reserves and the locations of command and observation posts.

Secondly, for carrying out the task, the following were assigned: the 2d Rifle Battalion of the 1128th Rifle Regiment reinforced by the 151st and 244th Army Rifle Companies, by the regimental artillery, a combat engineer regiment and the 3d Rifle Battalion of the 1132d Rifle Regiment reinforced by the 243d Army Company, regimental artillery and combat engineers of the regiment. As a whole, this grouping had over 1,600 men and exceeded the number of enemy personnel by 2-2.5-fold in the given area.

Thirdly, for conducting the reconnaissance in force, the section of Maloye Palchikovo and Bolvanovka was designated as this was close to a small bridgehead on the left bank of the Oka in the region of Bedrintsy and Krutogorye which had been captured by our troops even in the course of the winter offensive. The possibility arose of subsequently broadening this and creating a larger one. Moreover, landing and crossing equipment could be secretly and rapidly delivered down the Ista to the Oka in a preassembled form while the presence of fords, although deep ones, in the area of Teremtsy facilitated the crossing of the rifle subunits.

Fourthly, the division's combat engineer subunits under the leadership of the divisional engineer, Maj V. A. Manvel'yan, were given the following tasks: 2 or 3 days before the start of the attack, unbeknownst to the enemy, to make 20 10-m passages through the enemy minefields and obstacles and on the eve of the attack to mark them with unidirectional lights and lime; to deliver 14 DSL-10 boats and two rafts for the 45- and 76-mm weapons to the crossing area, to put up an assault footbridge from difficult-to-sink equipment and stretch two lines in order to support the fording. Bridges were to be built after the capturing of the bridgehead.

Fifthly, the artillery reinforcements and our own under the leadership of the artillery commander, Lt Col P. A. Pichkura, were to destroy and neutralize the enemy firing positions in the zone of the attack and on the flanks, to disrupt command and subsequently neutralize the Nazi artillery and mortars and thwart counterattacks by Nazi reserves. The subunits of the chemical warfare troops were to conceal the crossing areas with smokescreens, by creating 10-12 smoke release areas directly on the bank of the Oka. Tasks were also set for the signals and rear subunits as well as measures to conceal and support the surprise of actions.

In the course of preparing for the combat operations at the training center, exercises were conducted with subunits from all the regiments on the subject "Crossing a River and an Offensive Against Heavily Reinforced Enemy Defenses." The final exercises of all the rifle battalions and artillery subunits of the rifle regiments were conducted by the divisional commander during the period from 1 through 5 June.

The night of 11 June was dark and moonless. Regardless of this, the rifle subunits along routes which had been reconnoitered in the day and were well marked by 2300 hours had taken up the jump-off position by the river. By this time, the combat engineers had noiselessly brought down the Ista and deployed the boats and rafts along the assault crossing points, they had stretched lines for the fording and built the assault footbridge from difficult-to-sink equipment. A second group of combat engineers had completed removing the mines in the minefields and enemy obstructions and had equipped the passages through them.

The crossing started at 2300 hours. Two and a quarter hours later, some 1,600 men with guns assigned for direct laying had moved to the opposite bank and were by the very water's edge, 50-100 m from the enemy trench. Regardless of the fact that more than 500 men had forded the river and were in wet clothing, complete silence was observed for every man realized that the slightest rustle or cough would make it possible for the enemy to easily detect such a mass of men. The subunits remained at the jump-off line for around 2.5 hours. The Nazis under their ordinary procedures periodically illuminated the terrain with illuminating rockets and kept up aimless precautionary firing from the machine guns.

At 0350 hours, the artillery and mortars brought down fire on the German defenses in the crossing area. Nine minutes later, the intense shelling ended with a salvo by two battalions of rocket launchers and this was the signal for the enemy to rise up to the attack and for shifting the artillery fire in depth. The men of the division, keeping close behind the explosions of their shells

and mines, rushed the first trench of enemy defenses and initiated stubborn battles which often developed into hand-to-hand clashes. This was confirmed not only by combat documents, but also by the memoirs of participants. Here is what was written a year later about these events by the party organizer of the second battalion in the 1128th Rifle Regiment, MSgt N. I. Afinogenov: "The young communist, Comrade Vagir, commanded the platoon. When the attack on the enemy forward edge started, Comrade Vagir was the first of his troops to burst into the German trench. The Nazis put up fierce resistance. A hand-to-hand clash ensued. Using his bayonet skillfully, the courageous communist engaged the Nazi officers in a duel. In a brief but fierce hand-to-hand fight, Comrade Vagir stabbed three German officers. The communist, Comrade V. A. Smol'nikov fought the enemy in a bolshevik manner. One of the first to burst into the trench, he destroyed one officer and two soldiers."³

By 0900 hours, the battalions had captured the line of Maloye Palchikovo, Bolshaya Karagashinka and Bolvanovka. Due to the fact that the subunits had as a whole reached the designated line and carried out the task, the divisional commander gave orders to dig in strongly on the captured bridgehead.

In endeavoring to restore the defenses along the eastern edge of the Oka, the enemy command concentrated here the reserves of the 112th Infantry Division and on 13 June had moved up the 208th Infantry Division from the region of Bolkhov and committed it to battle.

The first enemy counterattack started at 0930 hours on 11 June. During the day, three of them were driven off with a force of up to an infantry battalion each.

In conducting the defensive engagements, over the next 9 days the Soviet soldiers repelled 40 fierce attacks by enemy infantry and tanks. Here are several excerpts from the combat reports and operational summaries: "During 12 June 1943, three counterattacks were driven off with a strength of up to two battalions each. Prisoners were captured from the 256th Infantry Regiment of the 112th Infantry Division. 13 June 1943, during the day nine counterattacks were driven off with a strength of an infantry battalion and four-six tanks each. The moving up of infantry, artillery and tanks from the direction of Bolkhov was observed."⁴

"14 June 1943. According to adjusted data, the enemy on 13 June and the night of 14 June conducted 12 counterattacks. At dawn of 14 June, counterattacks continued. At 1100 hours of 14 June, 17 aircraft bombed Bolvanovka, Bolshaya and Malaya Karagashinka. In 3 days of battle, up to 3,500 enemy soldiers and officers were destroyed. A training company from the division (80 men) has been moved from the division's reserve to the bridgehead."⁵

On the same day, a telegram was received and delivered to all the men. It was from the commander of the Bryansk Front, Col Gen M. M. Popov and the member of the military council, Lt Gen I. Z. Susaykov, and stated: "To Maj Gen Comrade Kuznetsov. Please extend greetings to the fighters and commanders of the glorious 336th Rifle Division which mercilessly has destroyed the Nazi scum. The front's military council is confident that your division will rout the impudent Nazi curs and will not give up a single inch of land to the enemy. Glory to the fighters and commanders of the 336th Rifle Division!"⁶

All the enemy counterattacks were successfully repelled. But for this the troops defending the bridgehead had to be constantly reinforced. During the night of 17 June, an additional battalion from the 1128th Rifle Regiment and all the rifle companies of the 1132th were shifted there, and by 20 June all three rifle regiments of the formation were there (the remaining defensive zone was turned over to the 12th Guards Rifle Division). By this time, the combat engineers of the division and army had built two bridges of 10 tons each, one for 16 tons and two for 60 tons, and one of them was an underwater bridge. In addition, two ferries of 16 and 60 tons were in operation.

Thus, the reconnaissance in force developed into a continuous heavy battle for all the units of the division. In it hundreds of soldiers demonstrated examples of bravery, tenacity and true heroism.

As a total, from 11 through 19 June, the enemy lost over 5,000 soldiers and officers killed and wounded and 40 men were taken prisoner. The Soviet troops destroyed 33 tanks and assault guns, 66 guns and mortars, 40 medium machine guns, 73 light machine guns, 128 automatics, 1,365 rifles and 2 radios. The following equipment was captured: 1 food depot, 2 ammunition dumps, 4 guns, 4 tanks, 1 assault gun, 35 mortars, 3 machine guns, several hundred rifles and automatics and 2 radios. Our losses were 572 men killed and 1,420 men wounded.⁷

On 21 June, the Nazis ceased the counterattacks and during the night of 9 July, the division turned over the defenses of the bridgehead to the 12th Guards Rifle Division and was moved to the army's second echelon.

Here is how those days are remembered in a letter to the division's veterans some 35 years after the end of the war and written by Maj (Res) V. M. Chernetsov who at that time commanded the 3d Rifle Battalion of the 1132d Rifle Regiment: "During the night from 10 to 11 June 1943, when the battalion secretly was directly approaching the river for crossing it, the Nazi propagandists began transmitting over loudspeakers with an invitation to go over to them. This was all very amusing to us, it raised our mood and the soldiers, forgetting about the danger, began to joke. They whispered to me that the Nazis themselves were inviting us and consequently we must hurry up to meet them. At 0400 hours, after a powerful 10-minute artillery softening up, we went to the meeting but there was almost no one to meet. Our artillery troops, mortar troops and particularly the rocket launcher troops had done their work so well that when we rushed the German trenches there were only corpses there.... Those remaining alive could not talk as they were stunned by the salvos and surprise and they merely put their hands up to be taken prisoner.... This was how our soldiers in the battalion replied to the appeal of the Nazis to come over to their side. Approximately 2 or 3 hours later, the fascists having come to their senses, brought up reserves from the second echelon and began to counterattack us in the aim of recovering the position. Some 43 such counterattacks were driven off. In these battles it was difficult to distinguish who fought worse and who fought better. The entire personnel of the battalion fought bravely and carried out the mission to the end.... At one moment of battle, telephone communications were interrupted with the 7th Rifle Regiment. It was essential to immediately establish the situation of this company which was driving off the next German counterattack. The signalman Kayumov not only promptly ascertained the situation on the forward edge of the company but also captured two German prisoners. Returning to the battalion command post, he was unable to report that

he had carried out the mission, but was only able to indicate with his eyes the two captured Nazis and then fell. It turned out that Kayumov himself was severely wounded and bleeding profusely, carried out the order and even took two German soldiers prisoner.... Sgt Lidov in one of the hand-to-hand clashes in a trench on the forward edge with a Russian fist killed a Nazi. I told about this event at the combat aktiv of our division after the end of the battles on the Karagashinka bridgehead. Gen Belov ordered this sergeant to be called and personally presented him with the Order of the Red Star.... I recall with great respect and gratitude my combat commanders, the regimental commander K. Z. Fedorov...and many other senior comrades who helped us mature and taught us to fight and be victorious. A great thanks to them for this. I now live and work at the Mirnaya Mine at the Rostovugol' [Rostov Coal] Association. The work of miners is responsible and unusual and, when things get difficult for us on the job, I frequently recall episodes from the war years and tell the young miners how we during the war years got out of difficult situations. The people listen, understand and do a great deal, seemingly, the impossible. I often meet with young people at schools and enterprises and describe a great deal about those soldiers, sergeants and officers who won for them a peaceful job and a happy youth...."

As a whole, as a result of the battles of the 336th Rifle Division to the northwest of Mtsensk, significant harm was caused to the Bolkhov Nazi troop grouping. The captured bridgehead, although small in size, on the left bank of the Oka made it possible to erect the bridge crossings over the river. In July 1943, over them crossed the rifle, tank, mechanized and artillery formations and units which completed the defeat of the Bolkhov enemy grouping and then participated in the liberation of Orel.

These battles are also instructive for present-day conditions. They clearly show that with careful preparation of combat operations and the ensuring of surprise, it is possible to achieve success even in such a difficult situation as an offensive against strongly prepared enemy defenses with the crossing of a river.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 1651, inv. 1, file 1, sheet 6.
- ² Ibid., file 18, sheets 182-190; file 1, sheets 4-6.
- ³ The divisional newspaper SNAYPER, No 68, 1944 (TsAMO, folio 1651, inv. 2, file 93, sheet 76).
- ⁴ TsAMO, folio 1651, inv. 1, file 24, sheets 36, 39.
- ⁵ Ibid., sheet 40.
- ⁶ Ibid., inv. 2, file 93, sheet 78.
- ⁷ Ibid., inv. 1. file 1. sheets 7,8; inv. 2, file 90, sheet 85.

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WARTIME EXPERIENCE OF RIFLE DIVISION COMMANDER RECOUNTED

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[Article published under the heading "The Soviet Art of Warfare in the Great Patriotic War" by Docent and Candidate of Historical Sciences, Col (Res) A. Rakitskiy: "The Art of a Division Commander"]

[Text] In the spring of 1942, the 389th Rifle Division arrived from the Hq SHC reserves as part of the Northern Group of Forces of the Transcaucasian Front. In September of the same year, Lt Col L. A. Kolobov¹ who previously had headed the staff of the XI Guards Rifle Corps assumed command of the formation. He continuously commanded the division right up til the end of the Great Patriotic War. The formation fought its way from Ishcherskaya Station from the Terek River to the town of Usti na Labem in Czechoslovakia. The division was tempered in the course of combat operations and its strikes became ever stronger. The skill of the personnel grew and the art of the division commander was improved.

Here are several most characteristic examples.

In January 1943, the 389th Rifle Division was conducting offensive operations as part of the 9th (from 11 January, the 37th) Army, pursuing the retreating enemy along two parallel routes some 5-8 distances apart. Here the main forces of the regiments were advancing in columns. By the middle of the month, the formation had advanced a significant distance in the direction of Armavir and received orders to liberate it. The division command realized that the Nazi troops would defend this major junction of railroads and highways stubbornly. Accurate data were needed on the enemy defensive system, its effective and numerical strength. For this purpose the division commander and staff organized reconnaissance toward the southern and eastern outskirts of the town.

Reconnaissance established that on the southern and southeastern edges of Armavir, a solid defense had been organized consisting of trenches, communications trenches, wire obstacles and mixed minefields and artillery positions. The roads were covered particularly closely. The eastern and northeastern edges were little fortified and only several small strongpoints lay there. To the northeast stretched the Kuban, and on the southeast the Urup River. The Armavir garrison numbered over two infantry regiments reinforced with artillery, several tanks and assault guns. Many motor vehicles and other equipment had been concentrated in the town. The subunits and units which had been defeated in battles had retreated to Armavir.

In this situation, L. A. Kolobov decided to make a night assault on the town of Armavir, making the main thrust with two regiments (the 1277th and 1279th Rifle Regiments) along its eastern edge, that is, against the weak and vulnerable place in the enemy defenses, while the third regiments (the 545th Rifle Regiment) was to advance against the southern edge where the enemy had strong defenses.²

In adopting such a plan, the division commander counted on achieving surprise. His intuition told him that the Nazis were not expecting an attack across the Urup and the beginning snowstorm in nighttime conditions would confuse them about the actions of the main forces and ensure success.

Preparations for the nighttime combat operations of the division's units started on 22 January. They were carried out in a difficult situation. The division was on the move. It was essential to deploy the regiments from march formations into battle formations, to take up the jump-off position, organize cooperation and control and give tasks to subordinates. And all of this had to be done in 1 day.

L. A. Kolobov showed great efficiency and purposefulness in his work. His ebullient energy was communicated to all officers and soldiers. He sent the formation's chief of staff, Lt Col V. A. Yerigov, to the 1277th Rifle Regiment in order to aid his commander in organizing combat on the spot. The staff officer, Sr Lt D. M. Proektor was sent to the 545th Regiment with combat instructions and a map of the situation plotted on it.³ L. A. Kolobov himself initially went to the 1279th Regiment which was under the command of the recently appointed Maj S. D. Zhulikhin, and then to the 545th of Maj G. S. Khabibulin, where he remained for a longer time. The problem was that the 545th Rifle Regiment, although advancing in a secondary sector, would determine the outcome of the entire engagement. It should initiate the attack an hour ahead of the other units, at 2100 hours, in order to attract the enemy's attention and most importantly force the enemy to bring up and commit its reserves.

"You will start the attack after a 10-minute artillery barrage with one battalion along the road. It probably will not be successful as the enemy has strong defenses there. Then, 20 minutes later, commit the second battalion from behind the left flank," L. A. Kolobov ordered the regiment commander.

"The enemy may also repel this attack," continued Leonid Aleksandrovich [Kolobov]. "Everything will depend upon the decisive actions of this subunit. However, 20 minutes later, under any circumstances, it is essential to commit the third battalion on the left flank. It is essential to broaden the front of combat operations in the direction further away from the place of the main thrust and to tie down the enemy reserves there."

The political workers and the secretaries of the party and Komsomol organizations provided great help to the commanders of the units and subunits in the period of preparing for battle. They explained to the men the importance of rapidly capturing Armavir. Their inflammatory and battle-inspiring words lifted the offensive zeal of the men.

On 23 January, with the fall of darkness, the division's units began to move out and take up the jump-off position. The artillery took up its positions for firing with direct laying while the medium and light machine guns were mounted on skis and sleds. However, the start of the offensive had to be moved back an hour as many subunits did not succeed in taking up the jump-off position.

At 2200 hours, the 545th Regiment and at 2300 hours the other two regiments under the conditions of a snowstorm which grew even stronger during the night went over to the offensive. By the morning of 24 January, Armavir was completely cleared of Nazis. Particularly unexpected for the Nazis was the attack by our subunits from the northwest. The 2d Rifle Battalion of the 1277th Regiment which advanced along the railroad took the station by surprise and straddled the road which ran from the city along the Kuban to Novo-Kubanskaya Station. The enemy began to panic and it commenced to hurriedly retreat, blowing up and setting fire to the industrial enterprises, cultural and educational institutions.

The men of the division during the battle demonstrated courage and heroism and proved themselves to be intrepid fighters. Here are just a few examples. The company Komsomol organizer and squad commander of the 545th Rifle Regiment, Pvt N. V. Gerasimov, destroyed three Nazis in a hand-to-hand clash and carried three wounded soldiers from the battlefield. The secretary of the regimental Komsomol bureau, Lt N. I. Glushkov, repeatedly participated in attacks and killed three Nazis. The gun commander of the same regiment, Sr Sgt Iskhak Davitov, destroyed five enemy firing points with direct laying. The mortar squad of Jr Sgt Gafur Murzayev from the 1279th Rifle Regiment neutralized three firing points and destroyed many enemy soldiers. The commander of the rifle squad from the 1277th Regiment, Talyu Beisenov, using a light machine gun destroyed scores of invaders in repelling a counterattack.⁴ All these Komsomol soldiers were sons of the various Soviet peoples.

This was the first major battle of the formation in which the ability of L. A. Kolobov to prepare and organize successful combat operations was clearly apparent.

The 389th Rifle Division along with other formations continued its march to the west. A year later, in January 1944, it liberated the Ukrainian town of Berdichev which had been turned into a strongpoint by the Nazis. The fierce, bloody battles lasted 5 days. And here Col L. A. Kolobov showed himself to be a master of organizing and conducting combat operations in a city. He sent storm groups and detachments where there were stone buildings, he promptly retargeted the artillery and reserves and in difficult moments of combat himself appeared on the forward edge among the soldiers and sergeants.

For decisive actions and mass heroism shown by the personnel, the 389th Rifle Division was given the honorary name of "Berdichev."⁵

The commander qualities and talent of L. A. Kolobov were disclosed particularly clearly in the Lwow-Sandomierz Offensive Operation. Here the division commander ably and promptly employed the maneuvering of units and subunits on the battlefield. The 389th Rifle Division which was part of the XXII Rifle Corps

was fighting in the first echelon of the assault grouping of the 3d Guards Army. Even during the first day of the offensive, 13 July 1944, it successfully broke through the defenses and by noon had reached the enemy strongpoint, the town of Gorokhov. The attempt of the first detachment to take it without a halt was unsuccessful. Col L. A. Kolobov took a bold decision. He sent the 545th Regiment around Gorokhov to the north and the 1277th to the south. From the front, the 1279th Regiment continued its active operations. Under the cover of fire by the 950th Artillery Regiment of Lt Col I. M. Antonov, the outflanking units quickly deployed into battle order and rapidly attacked the enemy. The battle did not last long. By 1700 hours, Gorokhov was liberated.⁶ The division's units had not yet dug in when the enemy at 1800 hours in a force of up to an infantry regiment with 20 tanks after artillery shelling counter-attacked them, but without success.

In July 1944, L. A. Kolobov skillfully organized the battle for the town of Sokal which is on the Western Bug. He sent a battalion from each regiment to cross the river and seize a bridgehead while the remaining forces attacked the city from three sides. At the dawn of 14 July, the 389th Rifle Division liberated Sokal and captured a bridgehead on the western bank of the river and from this developed the offensive further.

Until the end of the month, the division continued to pursue the enemy without halting. On 28 July 1944, a forward detachment from the division had reached the Vistula. Having assessed the situation, L. A. Kolobov ordered the battalion commander, Maj S. Ya. Batyshev,⁷ to cross the river on available crossing equipment and to seize a bridgehead. The subunit successfully carried out this task.

Having crossed to the bridgehead, Leonid Aleksandrovich continued to direct combat operations from a command post which was set up directly in the battle formations of the battalion. The Nazis endeavored to overrun the Soviet troops and throw them off the bridgehead, in subjecting them to continuous artillery, mortar and air strikes. In this difficult situation, the division commander took the decision to bring the battalion subunits as close as possible to the enemy's forward edge in order to avoid losses.

The command post of L. A. Kolobov was located in a levee. And although the command post had repeatedly hit with shells and mortars, the fascists had not succeeded in destroying it. Control of the formation did not halt for a minute. When wire communications were disrupted, the division commander used the radio. All his orders, instructions and commands reached the executors. As they approached the river, the division's subunits crossed the Vistula and widened the bridgehead. Particularly difficult battles were waged for the villages of Winjary and Winjarka around which were elevations which had been turned by the Nazis into fortified positions. These heights and population points literally had to be taken by storm. The division commander here also employed various tactical procedures: the attacks were alternated by night and day, evening and morning, with artillery softening up and without it, with the shout "Hurrah!" and in complete silence. In bloody and fierce battles, the division broadened the Winjarka bridgehead up to 4 km along the front and up to 1.5 km in depth.

On 9 August 1944, for the exemplary carrying out of the assignments of the command and for valor and courage shown in this, by an Ukase of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, the 389th Division was awarded the Order of the Red Banner. In September of the same year, for able leadership and personal heroism, its commander Leonid Aleksandrovich Kolobov was given the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. He was given the military rank of major general.

After the Great Patriotic War, Gen L. A. Kolobov held responsible command positions and was the deputy chief of the Military Political Academy imeni V. I. Lenin. He has 32 governmental decorations and is an honorary citizen of the towns of Ustina Labem and Huderovka in Czechoslovakia as well as the town of Sokal in Lvov Oblast.

At present, Lt Gen (Ret) L. A. Kolobov lives in Moscow and carries out extensive military-patriotic indoctrinational work among the youth.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ Leonid Aleksandrovich Kolobov was born on 8 August 1907 in the village of Shakh of Pereyaslavskiy Rayon in Yaroslavl Oblast. He joined the Soviet Army in 1928. He completed the Moscow Infantry School in 1931 and the Military Academy imeni M. V. Frunze in 1939. He has been a CPSU member since 1931.
- ² TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 389sd, inv. 31660, file 3, sheets 15-16.
- ³ At present, Daniil Mikhaylovich Proektor is a major Soviet historian, Colonel (Ret), Doctor of Historical Sciences and Professor. In the division, he was the assistant chief of the operations section.
- ⁴ TsAMO, folio 389sd, inv. 8900, file 50, sheets 50-53.
- ⁵ "Prikazi Verkhovnogo Glavnokomanduyushchego v period Velikoy Otechestvennoy Voyny Sovetskogo Soyuza" [Orders of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief During the Period of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union], Voenizdat, 1975, p 98.
- ⁶ TsAMO, folio 389sd, inv. 33977, file 3, sheets 70-71.
- ⁷ At present, Hero of the Soviet Union, Lt Col (Ret) Sergey Yakovlevich Batyshev is a prominent Soviet scientist and academician of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences.

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WARTIME EXPERIENCE IN TECHNICAL SUPPORT OF MOBILE GROUPS

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[Article published under the heading "Soviet Art of Warfare in the Great Patriotic War" and the subheading "Discussion of the Experience in Supporting Troops in Offensive Operations" by Engr-Maj A. Krupchenko: "Technical Support of Tank and Mechanized Corps Operating as Mobile Groups"]

[Text] In the offensive operations of the Great Patriotic War, the tank and mechanized corps were ordinarily employed for exploiting success as mobile groups of the combined-arms armies and fronts. Their technical support was significantly influenced by such factors as the high rates of advance and their great separation from the combined-arms formations. The corps frequently had to conduct combat operations with greatly overextended and in a number of instances unsecured lines of communications, under the conditions of an increased threat of enemy attack both from the flanks and from the rear. The situation was also complicated by the fact that along with centralizing the control over the technical support resources and particularly the repair and evacuation units, it was essential also to ensure autonomy (combat independence) of the tank units and formations in operations in the operational depth.

The carrying out of tasks related to technical support for the tank and mechanized corps was made difficult by the fact that the combined-arms armies with which the corps operated, as a rule, up to 1944 did not have their own TOE repair facilities and for this reason were unable to provide aid to the mobile groups. Even in those instances when the combined-arms armies received repair equipment as reinforcements, these were employed for rebuilding the armored equipment of the army units and formations. For example, in the Belorussian Operation, the I Guards Don Tank Corps was employed as the mobile group of the 65th Army and this corps included 260 tanks and SAU [self-propelled artillery mount]. In the course of the operation (from 24 June through 1 July 1944), the corps lost 98 tanks and SAU.¹ They all required medium repair and major overhaul. However, the 162d Mobile Repair Base of the army was unable to provide aid to the corps repair facilities, as it was completely engaged in repairing its own tanks and SAU (it performed 10 routine and 42 medium repairs on the tanks and SAU).²

The technical support resources of the tank and mechanized corps were improved in the course of the war. Prior to December 1942, a tank corps did not have

TOE repair bodies. All the tanks requiring medium repair and major overhaul were turned over by the corps to the army and front repair units. For carrying out routine repairs and providing skilled aid to the crews, the tank battalions of the corps had a support platoon while the tank brigades had a technical support company (RTO). In December 1942, the tank corps began to include two mobile repair bases (PRB) for medium repairs on tanks and motor vehicles. The mechanized corps formed in 1942 had a repair-rebuilding battalion (RVB) which rebuilt the weapons and equipment on a level of medium repairs. Later on, in December 1944, on the TOE of the mechanized corps, the RVB were replaced by mobile tank repair and motor vehicle bases (PTRB and PARB), the mobile repair bases of the tank corps were transformed into PTRB and PARB while their production capabilities were increased.

The technical support for a tank (mechanized) corps operating as a mobile group was carried out consecutively in three stages: during the preparations for the operation, in moving up to the line for being committed to the breakthrough (engagement) and during the period of operations in the operational depth.

The basic measures in technical support for the tank and mechanized corps in preparing for an operation were the following: the bringing of the units up to full strength in terms of weapons and equipment, the preparation of them for combat use, the creating of the corresponding groupings of repair-evacuation resources for rebuilding the weapons and equipment during the period the corps were operating in the operational depth, the technical training of troop personnel and special training for the personnel of the repair and evacuation units and subunits as well as planning technical support during the carrying out of the set tasks.

These measures were common ones in preparing for any types of combat operations for all the tank formations, however in terms of content they had substantial differences as they reflected the particular features of combat operations of the corps as mobile groups. For example, in preparing a corps for combat operations, it was essential to carry out certain special measures to ensure the dependable operation of the tanks and SAU to the entire depth of the obtained task, since in the course of the operation, due to the high rate of advance and the intensity of the combat situation, there were, as a rule, very limited opportunities for high-quality and prompt servicing of armored equipment. Thus, in preparations for an operation, a careful inspection of all the equipment was carried out in order to increase as much as possible the engine operating life of the tanks and SAU up till the next repair as well as to the next labor-intensive type of technical maintenance. This was ordinarily achieved by carrying out a technical inspection No 2,³ as well as by carefully inspecting the condition of the vehicles with the subsequent repair or replacement of undependably operating units, assemblies and parts.

Certainly the range of measures relating to readying the armored equipment for combat operations was not the same in the various operations. Everything depended upon the specific situational conditions, the tank and SAU strength of the corps, their technical condition, the length of the preparatory period and so forth. For example, the XVII Tank Corps (the Voronezh Front) in preparing for the offensive operation on the Middle Don (December 1942) was completely armed with tanks which had a used motor life averaging not over 40 hours.⁴ From

the unloading station to the concentration area (here the tanks were to remain 10 days), the corps made a march 75 km long. Under these conditions the range of measures related to preparing the armored equipment for combat operations was small and the basic content was a careful inspection of the tanks by a specially organized commission along with the crews. An analogous situation developed in other corps as well which prior to the start of combat operations were being made up for 2 or 3 months.

But there were also instances when corps which were at full strength in terms of armored equipment prior to the start of combat operations made marches over long distances and their combat fleet had little motor life left. Thus, the I Guards Mechanized Corps (Southwestern Front), prior to the start of an operation on the Middle Don (December 1942) had 105 T-34 tanks and 69 T-70.⁵ A large portion of the T-70 tanks broke down on the march. The corps repair shops were poorly supplied with tools, and there were not enough spare parts since the repairmen in the course of the march had used up the most frequently required parts and materials of the company ZIP [set of spare parts, tools and supplies] and subsequently were unable to replenish them. The personnel of the corps RVB provided great help to the tank and mechanized brigades.

In the course of preparations for the Belgorod-Kharkov Zhitomir-Berdichev, Budapest and particularly the Berlin Operations (prior to this, the corps had conducted extensive combat operations), in the technical inspection of the tanks and SAU, sometimes the rear armor was removed, the gear boxes were taken out, the radiators, fuel and oil tanks and filters were cleaned and flushed out, the engine mounts were checked and other fastening and adjustment work carried out. Such maintenance which in practice was termed a preventive inspection or inspection with repairs required significantly greater time outlays than was stipulated by the standards. For this reason, for conducting it not only the men and equipment of the battalions and brigades were employed, but also the corps, army and even front resources. Thus, for repairing the American M4-A2 tanks employed in the I Mechanized Corps, the 152d PTRB of the First Belorussian Front was involved (April 1945).⁶

Technical support was organized on the basis of the decisions of the corps commanders and taken by them in preparing for and in the course of combat operations. The immediate organizers of technical support were the deputy (up to 1944, assistant) commanders for technical affairs in the subunits, units and formations. During the period of preparing for the operations, the corps worked out technical support plans. All measures were planned according to lines of advance. The planning of technical support for the support (mechanized) corps was basically aimed at correctly determining the tasks for the repair and evacuation units during the moving up, the committing to the breakthrough (engagement) and the operation of the corps in the operational depth as well as the composition of the required grouping of repair and evacuation facilities. Here particular attention was paid to ensuring a high degree of autonomy for the repair installations with the operation of the mobile group in the operational depth of enemy defenses.

In the moving up of the tank (mechanized) corps to the line of commitment to battle, the basic task of the technical support resources was the organizing of a rear technical maintenance for the columns. In the tank battalions, the rear technical maintenance was provided by the TOE repair facilities. In certain

operations (the Belorussian and Iasi-Kishinev), the rear technical maintenance, in addition, included the tanks and SAU which had been additionally equipped with towing lines self-recovery expedients and sandbags for putting out fires. The task of these tanks (SAU) was to help pull out stuck vehicles as well as serve as a means of transport for the repair troops when their mobile shops (and all of them, as a rule, were mounted on vehicle chassis) could not move directly behind the tanks due to a lack of roads or combat situational conditions.⁷

Rear technical maintenance in the tank brigades was organized by the forces of the technical support companies. In addition to the repair equipment, this included motor transport with spare armored equipment, fuels and lubricants and food as well as tank tractors. It must be said that over the entire war the tank and mechanized corps were not sufficiently provided with tractors for recovering tanks. In the troops there were crawler tractors which because of their slowness could not escort the tank columns and in addition they did not have armored protection. But frequently the formations did not have enough such tractors. For example, in the XVII Tank Front (Voronezh Front, December 1942) they were short 13 tractors. During this same time the I Guards Mechanized Corps (Southwestern Front) did not have a single tractor and the I Tank Corps (Orel Operation, Western Front) possessed just 6 tractors. In essence, the I and II Guards Tank Corps in the Belorussian Operation did not have tractors.⁸ Experience shows that in all the corps, as a rule, vehicles with damaged weapons and often malfunctioning ones were used for the recovery of tanks.

In order that the repair facilities did not fall significantly behind their units and formations, the working time of the rear technical maintenance was limited to certain hours. For brigades this usually was around 2 hours and even less for battalions. Equipment which broke down and required more time for repair was turned over to the corps and sometimes the army repair facilities.

The mobile repair base of a tank (mechanized) corps followed behind the main forces. Ordinarily its equipment was distributed along the routes of advance and here the basic forces were positioned in the sector of the main thrust, that is, where the larger amount of equipment was moving up. A portion of the PRB resources was assigned to the reserve of the deputy corps commander for technical affairs.

After the commitment of the tank (mechanized) corps to the breakthrough, technical maintenance became responsible for the tasks of promptly and effectively carrying out technical maintenance in the course of the operation, rapidly repairing and restoring damaged and malfunctioning tanks and SAU to combat. During this period, great difficulties arose in organizing technical inspections Nos 1 and 2 since a significant amount of daylight was needed for conducting them. But if an inspection of combat vehicles was to be carried out at night, it was essential to provide, on the one hand, additional illumination, and on the other, careful blacking out. Because of this, in the course of an operation they frequently had to limit themselves to technical maintenance on the tanks and SAU on a level of the daily technical maintenance and inspection.

In the course of inspecting the combat vehicles, malfunctions were frequently detected which required the carrying out of the numbered types of inspection

and sometimes the sending of the vehicles off for repair. As a rule, there was not enough time for this and hence special methods of organizing technical maintenance had to be sought out and applied. For example, when the IV Guards and XVIII Tank Corps (the Zhitomir-Berdichev and Iasi-Kishinev Operations) as well as in the I Mechanized Corps (Berlin Operation) when it was required to carry out a numbered technical inspection, the work was broken up into a number of elements and these jobs were performed consecutively over several days. Moreover, the repair equipment of the brigades and corps was involved in carrying out inspections.⁹ Often the scope of the inspection was reduced by excluding certain secondary jobs. For providing help to the tank and SAU crews it became a practice to also use the personnel from the motorized rifle subunits.

As experience shows, the average daily breakdown rate of the tanks and SAU in the tank (mechanized) corps operating as mobile groups during the war years was 8-10 percent of the listed equipment by the start of combat operations. In certain operations the corps lost up to 50 percent of the tanks over 2 or 3 days of battle. Thus, the IV Guards Tank Corps (Steppe Front) in the Belgorod-Kharkov Operation lost one-half of its tanks over 3 days of battles.¹⁰ Upon reaching the Dnepr (the end of September 1943), the VII Guards Mechanized Corps had only 33 tanks in working order.¹¹

The basic method of maintaining the battleworthiness of the corps in the course of combat operations was to repair the damaged equipment directly in the troops, as during the war years the corps were replenished with tanks and SAU ordinarily only in the preparations for an operation or in a period of extended operational pauses. The organization of repairs depended upon the specific conditions of the combat situation and particularly upon the rate of advance. In those instances when the corps were committed to a so-called clean breach, for example the XXIV and XXV Tank Corps in the operation on the Middle Don (December 1942, the Southwestern Front), the II Guards Tank Corps (11th Guards Army) in the Belorussian Operation, the IV Guards Mechanized Corps in the Iasi-Kishinev Operation (Third Ukrainian Front), their repair units and subunits did not deploy after passing the engagement line, but rather followed behind the main forces in the same formation as in moving out, performing basically the functions of a rear technical maintenance unit.

If a corps was involved in extending the breakthrough of defenses, the repair and recovery groups of the tank battalions deployed behind the battle formations of the battalions while the RTO of the brigades and the PTRB of the corps deployed behind the first echelon brigades. Technical observation posts (PTN) were organized for observing the tanks and summoning repair equipment to damaged vehicles in the tank battalions.

Tanks and SAU which broke down with repairs requiring up to 4-6 hours were repaired by the repair subunits at the place they broke down or in nearby shelters. Vehicles with greater labor intensiveness of repairs were evacuated to the corps assembly point for damaged vehicles (SPAM) organized out of necessity in the area where the greatest repair facilities were concentrated. The length of work at it was determined depending upon the combat situation but, as a rule, did not exceed 12 hours. In truth, during the war years there were examples when the corps repair facilities remained on the engagement lines for 2 or 3 days (the IV, XXVI and I Tank Corps in the Stalingrad counteroffensive). As a

result, the repair capability of the corps in operations in the operational depth were significantly reduced and this told negatively on their combat capability.

During operations in the operational depth, the battalion and brigade repair subunits carried out routine repairs on combat vehicles lasting up to 6-8 hours. The repair facilities of the corps were also used primarily for repairing tanks and SAU requiring routine repairs. But when there were no such vehicles, they were employed in carrying out medium repairs lasting up to 12-18 hours.

As a rule, the tank brigades did not organize SPAM. Their repair equipment repaired combat vehicles directly at the place they broke down.

Sometimes (in very rare instances) the corps were reinforced by army or front repair facilities which ordinarily were employed for rebuilding equipment requiring a medium overhaul. For example, in the Iasi-Kishinev Operation, the XVIII Tank Corps (Second Ukrainian Front) received the front PTRB as reinforcements. It was completely employed in medium repairs on the tanks and SAU.¹²

When the rate of advance was high, 40-50 km and more per day, as well as when the corps had a limited amount of recovery equipment, corps SPAM were not organized. In these instances, repair brigades were assigned from the corps PTRB and these repaired damaged vehicles where they had broken down. The tanks and SAU requiring a major overhaul or extended medium repairs as well as vehicles that were deeply stuck were left on the spot until the approach of the army or front repair and recovery equipment.

With the going over of a mobile group to the defensive, the brigade RTO for the corps PTRB were moved up closer to the battle orders of the formations and deployed under the cover of the troops. The work of repairing broken down tanks and SAU, was organized in such a manner so that the largest amount of vehicles with weapons in working order was brought to the defensive line. For this, rather often partial repair was carried out when the work was done first making it possible for the tank (SAU) to reach the defensive line under its own power and fire from its own weapons. Final repairs on such vehicles were organized later directly at the positions or in the close rear.

With the going over of a corps to the pursuit of the retreating enemy, its repair and recovery equipment was ordinarily employed in two groupings: one provided rear technical maintenance in the column, while the other moved behind the corps ready to deploy for work in the event of the appearance of significant repairs.

The effectiveness of repairing broken down equipment to a significant degree depended upon the supply of spare parts and materials for the repair bodies. In practice, mobile supplies of armored equipment, as a rule, had very limited amounts. The difficulties of organizing centralized supply from the army and front depots, particularly when the corps were operating a significant distance away and the ground transport lines were broken, forced the repair organizations to use working units, assemblies and parts from vehicles which were not to be repaired. The use of this source led to a decline in the production capacity of the repair units and subunits, since a portion of the personnel had to

be assigned for disassembling the needed assemblies and parts from the irretrievably lost vehicles. Nevertheless, such a method for providing armored equipment was widely employed in the war years. Experience showed that the tank and mechanized corps in operating in the operational depth obtained 40-50 and sometimes all 100 percent of the required units, assemblies and parts for repairing combat vehicles from irretrievably lost equipment.

In the course of combat operations, the deputy corps commander for technical affairs with a group of officers from the technical support service, as a rule, was at the corps command post. The technical unit of a corps was located at the rear control post. For directing the repair and recovery subunits and for supervising the carrying out of the issued orders, technical support communications were organized. These were provided by personal contact, by radio, by wire and mobile means. For accelerating the transmission of technical information and for ensuring secrecy, special coded tables were worked out. Working and report charts were kept in all units. In certain operations, special charts for irretrievable losses, major overhauls and medium repairs were drawn up upon a decision of the senior chiefs.¹³

Party-political work played an important role in improving troop technical support. The military councils of the armies, the political departments of the corps and brigades generalized the experience of party political work in the area of supplying, operating and repairing armored equipment and they organized an exchange of work experience. As a result, the situation was improved in the operation, safekeeping and repair of combat equipment while the losses of tanks and SAU due to technical reasons were reduced.

Thus, the experience of the last war has shown that technical support for tank and mechanized corps operating as mobile groups was organized, as a rule, by their own TOE resources. The army and front repair resources in a number of operations were used to repair combat vehicles on the line of committing the corps to the breakthrough (engagement) in order to ensure the complete moving of the corps repair and recovery units into the operational depth along with the tank and mechanized corps.

The corps mobile tank repair bases (PTRB) which were assigned for medium repairs on the tanks and SAU were often involved in routine repairs. Such a use of the corps repair facilities was caused by a desire not to allow them to become separated from the combat units. With the operation of the corps in the operational depth, particularly during a rapid offensive, the repair of tanks and SAU was widely organized directly where they broke down. This made it possible to significantly reduce the range of work in recovering vehicles requiring repairs at the SPAM.

The experience of organizing and providing technical support for combat operations of tank and mechanized corps used for exploiting success in the operational depth is not only of cognitive but also practical significance. A study of it can help solve many problems of troop technical support under the difficult conditions of modern combat.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 233, inv. 2309, file 16, sheet 162.
- ² Ibid., inv. 2309, file 159, sheet 379.
- ³ A technical inspection No 1 (No 2) corresponds to a modern-day technical maintenance No 1 (No 2).
- ⁴ TsAMO, folio 665, inv. 8650, file 4, sheet 155.
- ⁵ Ibid., folio 312, inv. 12897, file 4, sheet 18.
- ⁶ Ibid., folio 307, inv. 4148, file 340, sheet 172.
- ⁷ Ibid., folio 38, inv. 352785, file 8, sheet 196.
- ⁸ Ibid., folio 665, inv. 8650, file 4, sheet 155; folio 202, inv. 50, file 26, sheet 74; folio 241, inv. 2658, file 25, sheets 250-255.
- ⁹ Ibid., folio 417, inv. 67573, file 1, sheet 22; folio 680, inv. 215801, file 9, sheets 45-52; folio 307, inv. 4148, file 340, sheet 172.
- ¹⁰ Ibid., folio 665, inv. 276002, file 5, sheet 14.
- ¹¹ Ibid., folio 7gv. mk, inv. 4936, file 186, sheet 37.
- ¹² Ibid., folio 38, inv. 38806, file 8, sheets 243-247.
- ¹³ Ibid., folio 323, inv. 4756, file 22, sheet 185.

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WARTIME OPERATIONS: ALLIED COOPERATIVE EFFORTS AGAINST GERMANY

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[Second part of a two-part article published under the heading "World War II" by Candidate of Military Sciences, Lt Gen Tank Trps S. Radziyevskiy: "Military Cooperation and Coordination of Efforts by Countries of the Anti-Hitler Coalition"]

[Text] *On the basis of the agreement concluded on 18 July 1941 between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet government in Buzuluk, Orenburg Oblast, from December 1941, from the Czechoslovak citizens who had immigrated to the USSR, the first Czechoslovak military units was to be formed, a separate infantry battalion under the command of Lt Col L. Svoboda.* The questions related to the organization of the battalion were resolved through the Czechoslovak military mission in Moscow and the Soviet military mission to the Czechoslovak government in London. In the battalion there was a representative of the Soviet command with a group of instructor officers in the companies and platoons and these trained the subunits for combat, passing on to them their rich combat experience.

The questions of the operational-tactical employment of Czechoslovak units and formations were resolved by the command of those Soviet field forces to which these units were subordinate. Thus, in January 1943, the battalion arrived at the Voronezh Front and initially became part of the 25th and later the 62d and 15th Guards Rifle Divisions of the 3d Tank Army which was fighting on the main sector in the offensive engagement of the front near Kharkov. The battalion went on the defensive at Sokolovo and its personnel showed high heroism and courage.

Upon the decision of the GKO [State Defense Committee] of 29 April 1943, on the basis of the battalion and a reserve regiment in Novokhopersk, the 1st Separate Czechoslovak Brigade began to be organized. Soviet officers (21 men) and soldiers (148 men) were appointed to certain positions in the brigade. In October 1943, the brigade arrived at the Voronezh (from 20 October, the First Ukrainian) Front and was put under the commander of the LI Rifle Corps of the 38th Army. The brigade fought in the first echelon of the corps in the sector of the main thrust during the Kiev Operation and participated in the liberation of the Ukrainian capital.

Subsequently, the brigade, in cooperation with the V Guards Tank Corps in the region of the town of Vasilkov, and subsequently in the area of Shevchenko, repelled enemy counterstrikes. From 15 November it was under the 40th Army and participated in the battles for Belaya Tserkov. On 10 January 1944, the brigade was shifted to the second echelon of the army, and a week later in the Korsun-Shevchenkivskiy Operation it repelled counterstrikes in the area of Zhashkov in the sector of the L Rifle Corps.¹² In March 1944, it was sent for rest and bringing up to strength. By this time, in Yefremov, Tula Oblast, a second Separate Czechoslovak Paratrooper Brigade was being organized from Czechoslovak citizens who had fought in Soviet partisan detachments.

In anticipating operations on Czechoslovak territory, the Soviet government on 6 April 1944 gave its agreement to organize a Czechoslovak Army Corps (chak), and later an air fighter regiment (in 1945, it was turned into a combined air division), a separate tank brigade (with 65 tanks) and a number of other units and subunits.¹³

From June 1944, the first chak was under the First and Fourth Ukrainian Fronts, preparing for combat operations on Czechoslovak territory. At the request of the Czechoslovak command, the corps already had at work 470 skilled Soviet instructor officers and other servicemen with rich combat experience.¹⁴

In September 1944, the first chak participated as part of the 38th Army of the First Ukrainian Front in the Carpathian-Dukla Operation. In the course of it there were operational transfers of Soviet Army formations (the 359th Rifle Division) to the Czechoslovak corps and individual units and formations from this corps to the formations and field forces of the Soviet troops. On 6 October 1944, a battalion from the 1st Brigade of the first chak together with units of the Soviet Army (LXVII Rifle Corps) reached the Dukla Pass entering Czechoslovak land. This day is celebrated in the CSSR as the day of the Czechoslovak People's Army.

In capturing the Moravska-Ostrava industrial region in January 1945, a portion of the artillery from the first chak was involved in the artillery softening up in the zone of the 38th Army (5 artillery regiments). One tank battalion from the separate tank brigade of the corps fought with the Soviet 241st Rifle Division. In fighting as part of the First Ukrainian Front, the corps participated in the liberation of the towns of Presov, Bardeev and Zborov.¹⁵

On 22 January, the first chak was made part of the 18th Army¹⁶ which was fighting in the center of Slovakia. This regrouping created favorable conditions for manning up the corps, it helped establish contact with the partisan detachments and had a great impact on the political situation in the liberated areas of Czechoslovakia.

In March 1945, as part of the 8th Air Army of the Fourth Ukrainian Front, the first Czechoslovak Air Division was organized and simultaneously with it the 4th Separate Infantry and 2d Paratrooper Brigades.

From 10 March 1945, the 1st Czechoslovak Tank Brigade advanced in the Moravska-Ostrava Operation in the sector of the main thrust against Moravska-Ostrava, Olomouc and Prague as part of the 38th Army. The basic forces of the first chak fought under the 18th Army in the sector of Ruzomberok, Zilina and Kromeriz.

On 30 April 1945, the 38th and 1st Guards Armies with the participation of the 1st Czechoslovak Tank Brigade captured the town of Moravska-Ostrava while the infantry brigades of the first chak took the town of Zilina. Then the men of the Czechoslovak Separate Tank Brigade along with Soviet troops entered the capital of Czechoslovakia, Prague.

The contact of the military leadership of the Czechoslovak troops was carried out directly with the commanders and staffs of the fronts and armies. Personal contact and correspondence were carried out in Russian. With the first chak was a representative of the Soviet Command and with the air division a representative of the air army.

On the day of the attack by Nazi Germany on the USSR, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Yugoslav Communist Party appealed to the peoples of the nation urging them to initiate an armed struggle against the occupiers. This appeal was widely responded to in the nation. In the towns and villages, partisan detachments began to be formed and these soon thereafter were turned into the People's Liberation Army of Yugoslavia (PLAY). The first regular unit of this army was the 1st Proletarian Brigade which was organized on 21 December 1941 in the town of Rudo.

The Soviet people provided the patriots of Yugoslavia with moral and material aid. In November 1941, the Free Yugoslavia radio station was created on Soviet territory. Prominent leaders of the Yugoslav Communist Party participated in its work.

At the beginning of 1944, Soviet aid to the Yugoslav patriots had assumed a broader scope. Under the National Committee for the Liberation of Yugoslavia, a special military mission was accredited and this was headed by Gen N. V. Korneyev. In February 1944, it established contact with the PLAY Main Staff and the Yugoslav troops began to receive Soviet weapons, ammunition, fuel, communications equipment and so forth. For this purpose, special air bases were organized in Kalinovka (the Ukraine), Bari (Italy) and Craiova (Romania). From 15 May through 15 November 1944 alone, from these bases 1,799 aircraft sorties were made, 1,276 tons of diverse military cargo was delivered, 1,173 men were airlifted and 1,760 men evacuated.¹⁷

Even earlier, on 17 November 1943, the Soviet government had granted the request of Yugoslav patriots of creating Yugoslav units on Soviet territory along with their arming and supply. From 20 November 1943, in the Moscow Military District, a Yugoslav infantry battalion began to be organized (commander, Col N. Mesic). In May 1944, the battalion was turned into the 1st Yugoslav Infantry Brigade¹⁸ which in October was transferred to the PLAY and incorporated in the XIV Army Corps.

From August 1944, for training specialists in all branches of troops, the USSR organized a Yugoslav training center. At the same time, the organizing of a tank brigade was initiated and this was armed with 65 T-34 tanks. In March 1945, it was turned over to the PLAY. The brigade was the first formation of its armored troops.

In the autumn of 1944, the USSR organized two Yugoslav air regiments. These were also turned over to the PLAY. They marked the beginning to the creation of the Yugoslav Air Force. The Soviet air group made a great contribution to the organizational development of the Yugoslav Air Force and in November 1944 this group was made available to the PLAY Command. It not only supported the Yugoslav troops, but also trained 4,516 air specialists for the PLAY Air Force.¹⁹

In September 1944, the Soviet Army reached the Yugoslav frontier. The possibility arose of direct cooperation between the Soviet and Yugoslav troops. A decision was taken for the joint execution of the Belgrad Operation. In the course of it the northeastern regions of Yugoslavia and the state capital Belgrad were liberated. Cooperation at this stage was carried out by direct contacts between the commander of the Third Ukrainian Front, Mar SU F. I. Tolbukhin, and the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the PLAY, Mar J. B. Tito. In March 1945, the PLAY was transformed into the Yugoslav Army. Its divisions and corps were reduced to the 1st, 2d, 3d and 4th Armies. The Yugoslav Army, in fighting to liberate the nation, closed its right flank with the flank of the Soviet troops on the Drava River.

The Soviet Union provided political, technical and material aid to the Albanian patriots. For this a Soviet Military Mission was sent into Albania in August 1944.

The entry of the Soviet Army into Yugoslavia and Hungary threatened the entire grouping of enemy troops in the Balkans. Fearing encirclement and being cut off, the Nazis began to hurriedly retreat from Greece and Albania. In benefiting from this, the National Liberation Army of Albania which included in the autumn of 1944 7 divisions, 21 brigades and several separate battalions numbering a total of 50,000 men, at the end of November completed the liberation of their nation from the Nazis.

The forms of coordinating efforts and cooperation of the USSR Armed Forces with the troops of Romania, Poland and Hungary had their particular features. An active armed struggle against the Nazi bloc was undertaken by them in the course of the carrying out of the liberation mission of the Soviet Army in the European nations.

The government of royal Romania at the outset of the Great Patriotic War, in fighting in an alliance with Germany, fielded around 30 divisions and brigades against the USSR. The nation's economy was put into the service of the Hitler Army. The Romanian fascists, along with the German Nazis, plundered the Soviet lands and annihilated people.

The Romanian workers condemned the anti-Soviet war. At the head of the anti-fascist movement stood the nation's Communist Party. In June 1943, it succeeded in uniting the anti-fascist forces into the Patriotic Front. At the start of 1944, a partisan movement commenced. At the request of Romanian communists, the Soviet government sent several partisan groups into Romania.

On 4 October 1943, the Soviet government gave its approval to form the 1st Romanian Infantry Division from political emigres and patriotically-inclined prisoners of war in the area of Ryazan. Soviet officers were sent as instructors to this formation for providing contact with the Soviet command and giving aid in training. Thirty Romanian communists who had fought previously in the international brigades in Spain comprised the basis for the division's cultural and indoctrinational apparatus. On 25 March 1944, the division was included as part of the Second Ukrainian Front. In conducting combat operations, its units together with Soviet troops on 31 August entered Bucharest. Subsequently, this formation as part of the Second Ukrainian Front participated in the battles for the liberation of the northwestern regions of Romania and on Czechoslovak territory.

On 25 March 1944, the formation of the 2d Romanian Volunteer Division commenced in the USSR and this was complete only after the end of the war.

On 24 August 1944, the new Romanian government declared war on Nazi Germany. However, the army which was basically demoralized initially was unable to fight against the Nazis. The formations were below strength and poorly supplied. The Allied Control Commission headed by the front's commander, Army Gen R. Ya. Malinovskiy, made a great effort to carry out the truce conditions. However, the developing situation also complicated operational-tactical cooperation with the Romanian troops, in particular with the 1st and 4th Romanian Armies assigned for participating in combat operations to cover the northwestern and western regions of the nation.

At the beginning of September, the 1st and 4th Armies retreated under the attacks by the Nazis and Horthy Hungarian troops. The command of the front, upon instructions from Hq SHC, began quickly to move troops into the northwestern and western frontiers of Romania. The 27th and 6th Tank Armies came to the aid of the 4th Romanian Army and the 53d Army and XVIII Tank Corps to the 1st Romanian Army. The offensive by the Nazis and Horthy troops was driven back. After discussing the developing situation at Hq SHC and with the approval of the Romanian authorities, a decision was adopted on 6 September 1944 to put the 1st and 4th Romanian Armies, the IV Separate Army Corps and the I Air Corps under the commander of the Second Ukrainian Front. In the 20 Romanian divisions of these field forces were: more than 138,000 men, 8,159 automatics, 6,500 machine guns, 1,809 mortars, 611 artillery pieces and 113 aircraft.²⁰

For maintaining contact, Soviet operations groups with communications equipment and translators were sent to all the Romanian staffs (from the army down to the division and certain individual units). The officers of these groups also performed the functions of advisors and assistants of the Romanian commanders. Romanian groups of generals and officers with communications equipment and command documents remained constantly at the staffs of the Soviet armies which included Romanian troops and the staff of the front.

The Bulgarian people indignantly greeted the news about the attack by Nazi Germany on the USSR. On 22 June 1941, the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Workers Party appealed to the people, urging them to engage in a decisive struggle against the Nazi invaders and domestic reaction.

Under the leadership of the Bulgarian Workers Party, in 1942, the communist-led Fatherland Front was formed. A broad partisan movement arose on the nation's territory. By 9 September 1944, in Bulgaria there were fighting 1 division, 13 partisan brigades, 40 detachments, 6 soldier battalions and hundreds of combat groups. The total number reached 30,000 men.²¹ The People's Liberation Rebel Army tied down up to 4 German and 7 Bulgarian divisions as well as a large amount of police.

On 8 September, the Soviet Army entered Bulgaria. At 0200 hours of 9 September, an armed insurrection commenced in Sofia and this was directed by the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Workers Party and the Main Staff of the People's Liberation Rebel Army. A Fatherland Front government replaced the monarchistic-fascist regime. In the morning of 9 September, the new government broke with Nazi Germany, declared war against it and established close ties with the Soviet government and the other allied nations. Soon thereafter a truce agreement was signed with Bulgaria. For supervising the carrying out of the troop conditions, an Allied Control Commission was established under the chairmanship of the commander of the Third Ukrainian Front, Army Gen F. I. Tolbukhin.

After the victory of the armed insurrection in Bulgaria, a new, people's army began to be organized. Ten infantry divisions (almost one-half of the old army) were broken up and a large number of participants from the partisan movement and a portion of the personnel from the old army were merged into the remaining divisions.

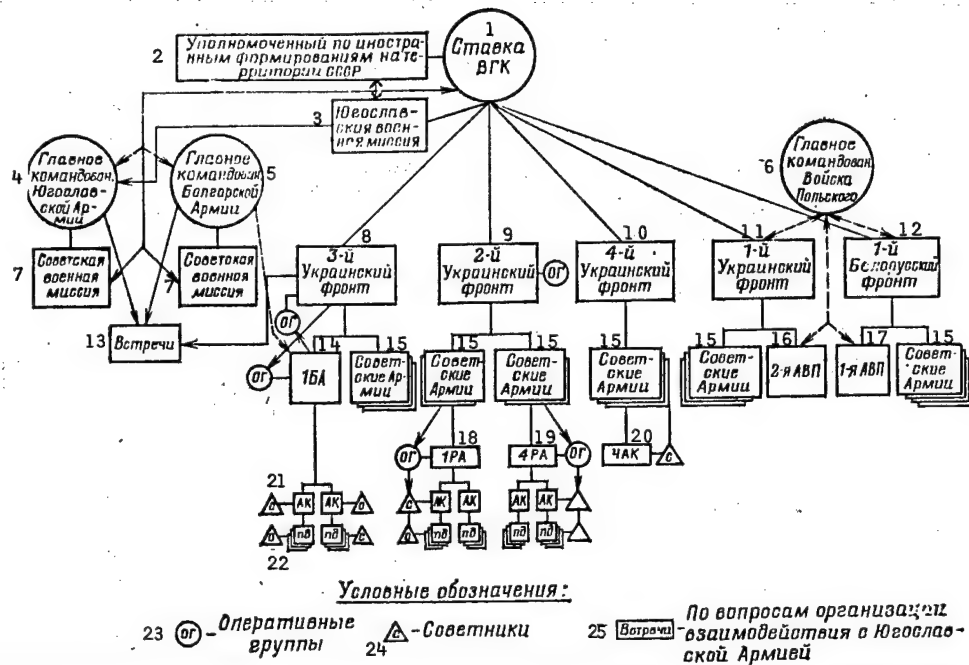
On 11 September 1944, a people's guard was created from the partisan detachments and this became the 2d Guards Sofia Infantry Division and the 13th Guards Regiment. From 22 September, the institution of deputy commanders for political affairs was introduced in the army. For coordinating actions and providing help in the organizational development of the army and in organizing its combat operations, Soviet military advisors were sent to the Bulgarian troops.

The Bulgarian Army took part in joint combat operations with Soviet troops. Upon a directive from Hq SHC of 20 September, the 57th Army of the Third Ukrainian Front was to fight toward the western frontiers of Bulgaria, and to the left of it on this same sector the 1st, 2d and 4th Bulgarian Armies were to advance, consisting of 13 formations and from 17 September being under the front's commander.

With the advance of the Soviet and Bulgarian troops to the Bulgarian-Yugoslav frontier, on 28 September, the Belgrad Offensive Operation started. Its plan was discussed by the PLAY Commander-in-Chief J. B. Tito and the Chief of Staff of the Third Ukrainian Front, Gen S. S. Biryuzov in the town of Craiova where a Bulgarian governmental delegation was also present. With this delegation an agreement was signed on the participation of Bulgarian troops in the Belgrad Operation.

After the Belgrad Operation, the Bulgarian government for further joint operations with the Soviet troops assigned the 1st Bulgarian Army which was reorganized. It included 6 infantry divisions with a total of 84,000 men (at the end of November 1944).

From 3 December, on the staff of the front a military mission was established from the Chief Command of the BNA [Bulgarian People's Army] headed by Maj Gen A. Krustev. The questions of reinforcing the army and its all-round support were resolved through this mission.



Troop Command System for Friendly Armies in Operations

Key: 1--Hq SHC; 2--Representative for foreign formations on Soviet territory; 3--Yugoslav Military Mission; 4--High Command of Yugoslav Army; 5--High Command of Bulgarian Army; 6--High Command of Polish Army; 7--Soviet Military Mission; 8--Third Ukrainian Front; 9--Second Ukrainian Front; 10--Fourth Ukrainian Front; 11--First Ukrainian Front; 12--First Belorussian Front; 13--Meetings; 14--1st Bulgarian Army; 15--Soviet armies; 16--2d Polish Army; 17--1st Polish Army; 18--1st Romanian Army; 19--4th Romanian Army; 20--chak; 21--Army corps; 22--Infantry division; 23--Operations groups; 24--Advisors; 25--On questions of organizing cooperation with Yugoslav Army

The fascist Horthy regime in Hungary was a dependable ally of Nazi Germany in the aggressive war against the USSR. A Hungarian army 160,000-strong fought on the Soviet-German Front. The Hungarian Communist Party worked in deep underground and urged the people to fight against fascism. In certain areas of the nation armed groups consisting of young workers were organized and fought. However, the partisan struggle in Hungary was of a limited nature due to the extreme cruelty of the regime which instituted a police system of a fascist dictatorship.

In the autumn of 1944, the Soviet Army, after defeating the Iasi-Kishinev grouping of Nazi troops reached the frontiers of Hungary. As a result of the

Debrecen and Budapest Operations, the northeastern part of Hungary was liberated and on 26 December, the Soviet troops surrounded the fascist grouping in Budapest. This decisively altered the domestic political situation in the nation.

In October-November, in the town of Szeged, the Central Committee of the Hungarian Communist Party was formed for directing the party organizations on the liberated territory. At that time, an underground central committee was operating in Budapest. Contact was established between these centers. On 21 December 1944, in Debrecen a Provisional National Assembly was convened and this elected a Provisional Government which on 28 December 1944 declared war on Nazi Germany. An Allied Control Commission, headed by K. Ye. Voroshilov was set up for monitoring the fulfillment of the truce conditions with Hungary. The Hungarian government under the agreement was to field at least 8 infantry divisions with reinforcements against Germany.²² The declaration of war against Germany was a condition for mobilizing the patriotic forces of the Hungarian people to fight fascism. Hungarian soldiers and officers who had gone over to the side of the Soviet troops participated in the battles for Budapest. Initially, they operated as separate subunits as part of our units and fought in the area of the South Station, Mount Gellert and the Buda Fortress.²³ Then they were reduced to a separate volunteer regiment which later became the 1st Infantry Division.

At the end of 1944, Hungarian volunteer units, the 1st and 3d Railroad Brigades and signals battalions, began to be organized on Hungarian territory. They successfully rebuilt the transport arteries and communications junctions. In April 1945, in accord with the agreement, the Hungarian government completed the organization of the 1st and 6th Infantry Divisions which were sent to the Third Ukrainian Front. After the war, they participated in the mopping-up of the SS and Bandera bands which remained in the mountain regions of the Alps.

During the joint battles of the Soviet Army and the troops of the allies in the anti-Hitler coalition in Europe, permanent contacts were established between them as is shown in the diagram for the purpose of coordinating military efforts. These contacts were carried out by the exchange of government envoys, with the aid of permanent reciprocal representatives as well as by direct contacts between the commanders and staffs of the cooperating troops. This provided a uniform understanding of the strategic, operational and combat tasks as well as effective leadership over the formations and units in joint military actions in fully considering the national features of the countries and the sovereignty of the allied troops.

The experience of the Great Patriotic War has shown that cooperation among the nations of the anti-Hitler coalition and in particular the organizing of joint combat operations made it possible to achieve a unity of goals in the war and mobilize the economic capabilities of the states for carrying out common tasks in defeating the aggressor. The acquired experience is of great international significance and can be widely employed in the activities of the Joint Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact states.

FOOTNOTES

- 12 TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 236, inv. 2673, file 974, sheets 107, 178, 183.
- 13 Ibid., folio 806, inv. 15889, file 6, sheets 115-156; file 1, sheets 137, 176.
- 14 "Na vechnyye vremena" [For All Times], Voenizdat, 1975, p 108.
- 15 TsAMO, folio 456, inv. 6850, file 624, sheets 104, 111.
- 16 Ibid., folio 244, inv. 3000, file 1283, sheets 114, 182.
- 17 Ibid., folio 40, inv. 11549; folio 75, sheets 95-100.
- 18 Ibid., folio 19, inv. 11539, file 46, sheet 1.
- 19 Ibid., folio 40, inv. 11549, file 82, sheet 20.
- 20 "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945" [The History of World War II of 1939-1945], Vol 9, Voenizdat, 1978, p 115.
- 21 "Osvoboditel'naya missiya Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil vo vtoroy mirovoy voyne" [The Liberation Mission of the Soviet Armed Forces in World War II], p 185.
- 22 "Vneshnyaya politika Sovetskogo Soyuza v period Otechestvennoy voyny" [Foreign Policy of the Soviet Union in the Period of the Patriotic War], Vol III, 1947, p 77.
- 23 "Osvoboditel'naya missiya Sovetskikh...", p 299.

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ROLE OF ARMIES IN LIBERATED COUNTRIES OF AFRICA

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[Article published under the heading "In Foreign Armies" by Candidate of Historical Sciences Ye. Mel'nikov: "The Role of Armies in the Liberated Countries of Africa (Based on the Example of Former French Colonies)"]

[Text] Armies in the liberated nations play a major role in their social development. In being organized on principles of one-man command and centralized control, rigid discipline and possessing the right to bear arms, and in representing the most powerful organized force, the army defends the interests of the ruling class and temporarily protects it. How this is specifically manifested in the various liberated nations with a capitalist and socialist orientation is shown in the article.

The armies in the capitalist oriented nations which were former French colonies arose out of small national units and subunits which were part of the colonial troops. In recent years, their role in sociopolitical and state life has noticeably grown. This is one of the basic trends in the development of such nations. Being an organic and very important part of the state apparatus, the army has begun more and more often to act either as a powerful stabilizing factor in preserving and strengthening the existing regime in the nation or, conversely, as a destabilizing one, often conducting state coups of a progressive or reactionary nature.¹ Thus, in 1963, there was a coup in Togo, in 1966 one in the Central African Republic (CAR) and Upper Volta, in 1967 one in Togo, in 1974 one in Nigeria and one in Upper Volta, in 1975 one in Chad, in 1978 one in Mauritania and in 1980 again one in Upper Volta. All the coups were carried out by the army, for under the specific conditions of a majority of present-day African states, only the army possesses real force. Because of this the ruling circles themselves in the capitalist oriented nations more and more frequently have begun to fall in a rather difficult situation and find it hard to elaborate a clear line vis-a-vis the army since, on the one hand, the army is a support for their regime and, on the other, the threat of a coup always stems precisely from the army and often it is precisely the armed forces that carry it out. Hence, the inconsistency in the line of the ruling circles vis-a-vis the army and their constant hesitations. Either they carry out a policy of so-called "depolitization" and neutralization of the army, in endeavoring to remove it as much as possible from the political and state life of the country and more precisely from the penetration of any sort of progressive ideas in it or,

on the contrary, suddenly begin in every possible way to "politicize" the army, endeavoring to create a stronger support for their regime from it.

Very characteristic is the example of the CAR in which the president and later emporor J. B. Bokassa with the aid of the army established a completely unlimited dictatorial regime which existed from 1966 through 1979. Thus, on 10 December 1970, in the CAR a decree was promulgated according to which the national army "has been and remains completely apolitical." This same decree endeavored to cut off the army from the population by prohibiting all civilians from having any contacts whatsoever with the representatives of the armed forces or conducting conversations of a political nature with them.² Similar decrees were repeatedly published subsequently. In April 1973, a decree was promulgated which, in particular, prohibited all servicemen, regardless of military rank, from belonging to any political party whatsoever or intervening in civilian affairs. At the same time, two military were removed from the government. The government, with the exception of its head, President J. B. Bokassa, became completely civilian. In May 1973, still another decree confirmed the "apolitical and neutral nature of the Central African Army," prohibiting the military from participating in any sports or cultural measures and allowing them to engage only in those types of sports required by military service.³

All these precautionary measures were undertaken to prohibit the army from becoming involved in any sorts of coups.

Armies perform two basic functions: domestic and external, aimed at protecting the state against attack from outside.⁴ However, considering the experience of the development of the capitalist oriented nations, it must be recognized that the most important function, from the viewpoint of the ruling circles, is still the domestic one, that is, defending their interests. For these purposes, a majority of the army personnel and particularly the officer corps is recruited from the tribe to which the head of state belongs so that the latter can rely on persons loyal to him in the army. However, this does not always succeed. Moreover, practice shows that a coup is often carried out by a fellow tribesman of the president since within the tribe there is also a struggle for power. This was the case, for example, twice in the CAR when in January 1966 J. B. Bokassa overthrew his cousin, the President D. Dacko, and then in September 1979, D. Dacko with the aid of French troops overthrew J. B. Bokassa.

The brunt of the army's internal function in the capitalist oriented nations is aimed primarily against the workers and progressive intelligentsia who, not able to withstand the suppression and arbitrariness from the ruling circles, have more and more frequently begun recently to organize strikes, to demonstrate and demand improvements in their socioeconomic position. Particularly characteristic in this regard was the situation which developed in 1978-1979 in the CAR, when the army not only repeatedly acted against the demonstrators, but once also employed weapons. As a result, there were a number of killed and wounded. The Central African Army employed its weapons also in breaking up a demonstration in Banqui organized in March 1981 as a sign of protest against the falsification of the presidential election results.

In this regard, it can be asserted that the role of the army and particularly the officer personnel in the capitalist oriented nations is very significant

and has recently noticeably grown. The army elite is a sort of independent force the sociopolitical orientation of which largely determines the state's future. It can even be said that the army, as the most organized force in the capitalist oriented nations, sometimes is turned from a part of the state apparatus into an unique political institution which plays a major role both in the ordinary life of the state and particularly during military coups. At this moment the armed forces and particularly the officer corps cease to be subordinate to all the other political institutions and place themselves over them, in essence, directing the entire nation both during the coup and in the period following it. Sometimes this period lasts for several years. For example, in the CAR and Togo it lasted, respectively, from 1966 through 1979 and from 1967 through 1979. In Upper Volta the participation of the army in running the nation was officially elevated even to the rank of state policy and a clause about this was incorporated in the 1977 Constitution. In such instances, several military are always part of the government. Characteristically, the more weakly developed the nation, the more significant the role of the army and particularly the officers in it.

In analyzing the major trend of the growing role of the armies in the capitalist oriented nations in the political life of these states, one other thing must be pointed out that that is the increased size of the armed forces. While 10-15 years ago the armies of these nations numbered 2,000 or 3,000 men, at present many of them have grown by 2- or 3-fold. For example, the CAR Armed Forces presently consist of several battalions and a number of smaller subunits of ground forces (3,500-4,000 men), a police (1,500 men), air force (250 men) and a river flotilla (100 men). The ground forces include: a battalion of engineer troops, a signals battalion, a battalion for maintaining airfield security in the area of the president's suburban residence, a guard, security subunits and so forth.

The weapons of the armies in the capitalist oriented nations which are former French colonies are basically French and this has led to a strong dependence upon France. In a majority of the armies for an extended time there were virtually no native officer personnel for the metropolitan area, France, particularly did not train them. Suffice it to point out that by 1960, that is, by the moment of proclaiming independence in the former French Equatorial and West Africa there were only 198 officers trained from local personnel, including 157 junior lieutenants and lieutenants, 31 captains, 6 majors and 4 colonels.⁵ For this reason, the role of officers in the national armies was at first carried out by Frenchmen and only gradually were they replaced by local African personnel trained at French military schools. But, regardless of this change, in the armies of the capitalist oriented nations up to now a significant number of French military advisors has remained and they, naturally, are concerned not only with purely army affairs, but also closely follow the domestic political situation and in a number of instances intervene in it. At the same time, France, like the other imperialist states, while officially recognizing the sovereignty of its former colonies, endeavors to keep its troops in these nations as long as possible.

In addition, the ruling circles of the capitalist oriented nations obviously still do not rely on their troops and recently there has been a clear trend to use French troops as insurance. Precisely this explains the fact that in

certain such states there are permanent contingents of French troops. As a total, approximately 10,000 French servicemen are stationed in Africa, including: 1,400 men in the CAR (they appeared there after the state coup carried out by them in the CAR in September 1979), 800 in Gabon, 800 in the republic of the Ivory Coast, and 1,000 in Senegal. The most French troops are stationed in Djibouti with over 4,000 soldiers. In addition, in France itself there are over 20,000 soldiers who are part of the so-called basic invasion forces which are always ready to immediately arrive at any point of Africa and which consist of an airborne division (12,000 men), a marine division (7,600 men) and a tank semibrigade.

France has mutual defense treaties with six African capitalist oriented states: Djibouti, Ivory Coast, Gabon, Senegal, CAR and Togo. Because of these, the ruling circles of these nations can always obtain military aid from France in the event of necessity. Such "aid" or more accurately direct intervention into the internal affairs of sovereign African states have been repeatedly observed. "The sphere of our military interventions," wrote the French newspaper LE MATIN in September 1979 on the occasion of the events in the CAR, "each year are growing wider and wider: yesterday Chad, Zaire and Mauritania and today the CAR." If one takes the last 20 years since independence was granted to a majority of the former French colonies in Africa, this list of countries where France intervened openly in their affairs would be significantly broadened. It would also include Cameroon, Senegal, Gabon, Chad, Western Sahara and the CAR.

At present, the idea is being proposed of concluding a multilateral defense treaty between the members of the so-called Economic Community of West African Nations and this would provide an opportunity for their ruling circles to act as a single bloc in defending common interests. Certainly all of this is being done with the direct approval of France.

The armies in the socialist oriented states have followed a diverse path. For example, in Algeria the armed forces were born in the stubborn 7-year struggle against the strong French army 800,000-men strong and armed with modern weapons. The armies of Guinea, Congo, Madagascar and Benin appeared either in the period of establishing the national democratic system or soon after the revolutionary democrats had won power. Here the armies were created, in essence, on the basis of the former semicolonial troop units and on a foundation of French views concerning the organizational development of the armed forces. But subsequently, they became organized in accord with new principles and were remanned from persons loyal to the army.

In contrast to the policy of the depolitization of the army which has been actively carried out in a number of the capitalist oriented nations, in the socialist oriented states the armed forces are viewed as an important political body which guards the interests of the national democratic revolution. For example, Article 99 of the 1979 Congo Constitution states: "The National People's Army, being a tool of the Congolese Revolution, is designed to defend national independence and sovereignty. It is entrusted with ensuring the security of the revolution, defense, unity and territorial integrity."

The chairman of the Central Committee of the Congolese Labor Party, the nation's president D. Sassou-Nguesso has pointed out that for the Congo bourgeois democratic theories about the neutrality of the army and that it "should refrain from participating in politics" are unacceptable. "The imperialist suppressors of our nation naturally have set for the colonial army the tasks of suppressing the people. For this reason, in independent Congo, there was a fierce struggle over the question of politicizing the army. As a result the thesis was victorious that the army is organized and understood as a political force the position of which is to reflect the struggle of classes in society. This was the victory of progressive, revolutionary circles who consider that it is essential to create a people's army which is closely tied to the masses...."⁶ The army in the Congo is an inseparable part of society.

The 1977 Constitution of Benin states about the close tie between the army and people: "The People's Armed Forces of the People's Republic of Benin are the armed forces of the Benin people and serve the people" (Article 10). Furthermore: "The defense of the motherland and the revolution is always the most noble and sacred duty for citizens of all ages. The citizens should carry out their military duty and be ready to Rebuff aggression" (Article 142). That the Benin Army firmly guards the interests of its people was stated very aptly in a resolution appeal to the soldiers of the people's armed forces adopted in 1976 at the first Extraordinary National Congress of the Benin People's Revolution Party. "It can be asserted," it states, "that since the beginning of the revolutionary movement on 26 October 1972, the patriotically inclined officers and soldiers of the People's Armed Forces of Benin have played a decisive role in defending the revolution of the Benin people and, in particular, the rank-and-file intrepid patriots who in the course of the development of the revolutionary process and particularly during the most difficult moments of our present revolutionary history, have shown enthusiasm, verve, decisiveness and high revolutionary activity proving that they fully guard the Benin people and are sincerely dedicated to their cause."

The 1975 Madagascar Constitution emphasizes that "the compulsory undergoing of military service is a duty of honor" (Article 19). The 1976 Algerian Constitution devotes an entire chapter to the army. It states the following: "The National People's Army, the heir of the national liberation army and the defender of the revolution, has as its permanent mission the protecting of national independence and national sovereignty. It is entrusted with ensuring the defense of the unity and territorial integrity of the nation as well as guarding its air space, land territory, its territorial waters, its continental shelf and its special economic zone. The National People's Army, being an instrument of the revolution, participates in the development of the country and the building of socialism. The participation of the people is a crucial element in the organization of national defense. The National People's Army is a permanent body of defense. The organization of national defense is set up and strengthened around the National People's Army. Service in the army is a duty and matter of honor. It is organized in such a manner to meet the requirements of national defense, to ensure an increased social and cultural level of the greatest number of citizens and to contribute to national development" (Articles 82, 83, 84).

The tasks of the Congolese Army are defined approximately in the same vein. "The National People's Army, the tool of the Congolese Revolution," states Article 99 of the 1979 Constitution, "is designed to defend national independence and sovereignty. It is entrusted with ensuring the security of the revolution, defense, unity and territorial integrity."

The army in the socialist oriented countries carries out three basic functions: defending the state against attack from without, suppressing counterrevolution within the nation and participating in building a new, socialist society.

There are many examples of protecting the states from external attack by the armies in the socialist oriented nations. Let us restrict ourselves to just several. In 1970, the Guinean Army repelled Portuguese aggression. In 1977, the Benin Army drove out foreign mercenaries which had been landed in Cotonou in the aim of carrying out a state coup. The suppression of counterrevolution within the nation can be seen from the active involvement of the Congolese Army in eliminating in 1970 a group of conspirators headed by Lt Kinganga. In 1973, the Congolese Army routed a reactionary detachment headed by Diavara. In the same year of 1973, the Guinean Army maintained order during the period that bank notes were exchanged in the nation and in a number of instances prevented attempts to provoke disorders by various speculative elements.

The chairman of the Central Committee of the Benin People's Revolutionary Party and the nation's president M. Kerekou said in 1977 that "the forces of the Benin National Army have proven to be a worthy instrument of our fighting industrious people, having overthrown on 26 October 1972 the terrible monster... which was pompously called the Presidential Council and was a lackey of imperialist domination of our nation, the People's Republic of Benin, beginning on 1 August 1960."¹⁰

As for the involvement of the armies in building a socialist society, in a number of the socialist oriented nations it has been very actively involved in this matter, particularly where it was necessary to do something quickly, for example, help the peasantry in promptly bringing in the crop, quickly building a certain project of important economic significance. On this question here is what the 1979 Congolese Constitution has to say: "The National People's Army participates in the economic, cultural and social development of the nation in the aim of building a socialist society" (Article 99).

This same idea is emphasized in the 1977 Benin Constitution: "The people's armed forces, being a specific body carrying out the tasks of ensuring security and defense and conducting combat operations, at the same time should participate in the production process" (Article 19).

"National military service," proclaims Article 20 of the 1975 Madagascar Constitution, "is organized, in addition to the needs of national defense, in such a manner as to ensure the social and cultural growth of the largest number of citizens and contribute to the development of the economic system."

In order that the army is able to perform these functions precisely and on a high political level, it should be mobile, strictly centralized and under the

overall leadership of the ruling revolutionary democratic party. Characteristically, the presidents are the commander-in-chief of the armies in the socialist oriented nations and at the same time they hold the positions of heads of the ruling parties. They, as a rule, head the corresponding bodies for national defense affairs. Moreover, a number of constitutions directly state that the army is under party control. Thus, Article 10 of the 1977 Benin Constitution states that the People's Revolutionary Party directs the armed forces and they are loyal to it. The chairman of the Central Committee of the People's Revolutionary Party and the president of the republic exercises supreme command over the people's armed forces. He is also the chairman of the commission on Benin national defense affairs.

In the aim of strengthening the party's influence among the personnel of the armed forces in the army subunits of the socialist oriented nations, primary party organizations are created and these conduct the corresponding political work and watch the ideological training of the personnel. "At present, the Congolese Labor Party," stated the Chairman of the Central Committee of the Congolese Labor Party and Congolese President D. Sassou-Nguesso in 1978, "has a firm structure in the army. There is no unit without a party cell. In addition, socialist youth organizations are active in the army."¹¹

The Soviet Union and the states of the socialist commonwealth have provided the necessary aid to the socialist oriented nations in military organizational development. Upon their request, in particular, highly skilled military personnel have been trained, they have handed on their experience in increasing the combat capability of the armed forces and so forth. At the 26th Party Congress, the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, Comrade L. I. Brezhnev said that "we along with the other fraternal nations are helping to strengthen the defense capability of the liberated states when they request this."¹²

Cooperation between the socialist commonwealth nations and the liberated socialist oriented states has been an important factor in strengthening peace and deepening detente in the world. On this question a major role has been played by the friendship and cooperation treaties concluded in recent years between the USSR and a number of the socialist oriented nations. "In the event of the development of situations which create a threat to peace or a violation of peace," states Article 7 of the Friendship and Cooperation Treaty between the USSR and the People's Republic of Congo signed in Moscow on 13 May 1981, "the High Agreeing Parties will immediately contact each other for coordinating their positions in the aim of eliminating such a threat or restoring peace."¹³

Such are the role and tasks of the armies in the liberated capitalist and socialist oriented nations. In the former the armed forces defend the interests of the ruling bourgeois and semibourgeois circles and their basic brunt is aimed against the workers in order to keep them in constant obedience. But this, as was seen above, cannot always be done.

In the socialist oriented countries, the armies, conversely, defend the victories of the revolution and take an active part in the socioeconomic development of their states.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ A military coup is a form of the violent change of state power as a result of which the leadership of a nation passes to the military. The nature of the coup depends upon who carries it out, that is, the progressive or reactionary forces, the interests of what social groups they represent and what policy they carry out after the coup.
- ² "Journal officiel de la Republique Centrafricaine," Banqui, No 23, 1970.
- ³ CENTRAFRIC-PRESS, 2 May 1973.
- ⁴ For more detail on the functions of the army in the developing nations, see: VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 4, 1980, pp 60-68.
- ⁵ J. Lee, "African Armies and Civil Order," London, 1969, p 42.
- ⁶ "Postup' svobodnoy Afriki" [A Step of Free Africa], Prague, 1978, pp 122-123.
- ⁷ "Dans la voie de l'édification du socialisme," Cotonou, 1979, p 119.
- ⁸ "Postup' svobodnoy Afriki," p 123.
- ⁹ "Materialy XXVI s"yezda KPSS" [Materials of the 26th CPSU Congress], Moscow, Politizdat, 1981, p 12.
- ¹⁰ PRAVDA, 14 May 1981.

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ZIONIST VERSION OF WORLD WAR II COUNTERED

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[Article published under the heading "Against the Bourgeois Falsifiers of History" by Candidate of Historical Sciences L. Korneyev: "World War II and the Myths of Zionist Propaganda"]

[Text] In the Accountability Report to the 26th Party Congress, the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, Comrade L. I. Brezhnev said that "adventurism and a readiness to bet the vital interests of mankind for the sake of one's own narrow selfish interests--this is what is particularly apparent in the policy of the most aggressive circles of imperialism."¹ This aggressive policy is carried out under the conditions of the initiating of psychological warfare by imperialism, fanning the hysteria of anticommunism and anti-Sovietism. In psychological warfare of imperialism a special place is held by Zionism, the most reactionary variety of Jewish bourgeois nationalism. The Zionist organizations active in many nations as well as the state of Israel, with the support of the entire international reaction, are working to strengthen the positions of the upper Jewish bourgeoisie in the capitalist system. The ideologists of Zionism feel that it is impossible to carry out this task without a simultaneous strengthening of imperialism by intensifying the struggle against the communist, workers and national liberation movement, against the socialist commonwealth nations and against the USSR. For this reason an anti-communist and anti-Soviet focus in Zionism as one of the shock detachments of imperialism has encountered full support among all the most reactionary circles in the world.

Often Zionism acts in the role of the organizer of one or another anticommunist, anti-Soviet campaign and ideological subversion and is the instigator of the actions of world imperialism, using its own levers and means for this. One such means for fanning the anticommunist campaign of Zionism has been to accuse the peoples of Poland, Belorussia, the Ukraine and Russia that they supposedly were "co-participants" in the Nazi extermination of the Jews during the years of World War II. At the same time, this campaign is aimed at concealing the years-long diverse cooperation between the Zionists and Nazis in 1933-1945. Moreover, the Zionist authors accuse other peoples of the world of "annihilating 6 million Jews," stating that they all turned their backs on the Jews and threw them to be "torn apart" by the Nazis. For this reason, the unmasking of Zionist

speculation about the Jews who were victims of Naziism is of important significance and serves the noble cause of the rapprochement and friendship of peoples. The historical facts and statistical data clearly repudiate the various slanderous fabrications of the Zionists and their supporters.

It must be pointed out that the information given in various studies on the statistics of the Jewish population on Nazi occupied territories or in nations involved in the armed conflict often differs significantly. For example, in 1941, 33,771 Jews were executed in Kiev at Babiy Yar along with tens of thousands of Russians, Ukrainians and representatives of other nationalities. This figure was given in the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem and corresponds to official Soviet data. But in 1978, a document of the World Zionist Organization (WZO) entitled "The Problems of Modern Zionism" stated: "...In one day around 100,000 Jews were executed in Babiy Yar alone."²

A very loose handling of statistical material is not only inherent to Zionist publications. Thus, the book by the German writer H. Kunrich entitled "The Concentration Camp State" states that of the 530,000 Jews living in Germany in 1933, only 30,000 "survived the Nazi terror."³ But the figure of 500,000 German Jews who "did not survive" the Nazi terror clearly contradicts the figures on the number of Jews who emigrated from Germany to various nations. Thus, according to the data of the Zionist "Encyclopedia of Zionism and Israel," the total number of Jews who emigrated in 1933-1945 from Germany to just Palestine was 58,666 persons, not counting the illegal emigrants.⁴

It is also possible to analyze the archival materials of the interagency Nazi correspondence related to the subject in question for shedding light on the statistical contradictions about the emigration of Jews from Nazi Germany and their immigration into Palestine. From these it is clear that in 1939, there were 360,000 Jews in Germany. By this time, no less than 170,000 had left there for various nations. In this instance the figure of 500,000 Jews "who did not survive the Nazi terror" cannot be considered even close to actuality.

It must also be considered that the Jews who did not emigrate from Germany were not all destroyed by the Nazis. In addition to those who survived in the concentration camps,⁵ a significant number running into thousands of people were deported by the Nazis to ghettos located on occupied Soviet territory, for example, in Minsk. As one of the leaders of the anti-Hitler struggle among the inhabitants of the Minsk ghetto, G. Smolyar has written in his memoirs, the German Jews with the aid of Soviet citizens--Russian and Belorussian--escaped from the ghetto and joined the partisan struggle. They did this in spite of the Minsk Judenrat (Jewish Council) the leadership of which had been captured by emigre Jews from Poland where Zionism in the prewar years had become widespread.⁶

The infamous speculation by the Zionists on the victims of Naziism cast doubt on the figure reported in the press of 6 million Jews who were supposedly destroyed in World War II. This cannot be considered scientifically sound although it is sometimes given also in certain Soviet publications.⁷

The origin of this figure is as follows. According to the data of the WZO, prior to World War II there were 6 million Jews in Europe. To a question of

the British Royal Commission on the possibility of moving them to Palestine, the WZO president C. Weizman stated: "No. The old will leave.... They are pollen, the economic and moral pollen of a large world.... Only a branch remains." ⁸

It is difficult to say what figures larger in this credo of the then leader of international Zionism: cynical disdain for the fates of millions of "fellow believers" or "Talmudic practicality." But the fact remains a fact that precisely the figure of C. Weizman was subsequently adopted as the initial one, as an indicator of the "Holocaust" of European Jewry. There is every reason to assume that the real number of victims is less.

To this it must be added that if it had not been for the Zionist-Nazi alliance, the number of Jews destroyed by the Nazis in World War II would have been less. The Zionist leaders in loyally obeying Nazism turned over and doomed a mass of Jews to death. With their aid, 2.8 million of the Polish Jews out of 3.3 million were killed. ⁹

The destruction of the Eastern European Jews possibly would have been total if it had not been for the international aid to the Jews from the Soviet and Polish patriots and partisans. "In risking their own lives, the Jews were rescued by Poles who were killed by the Nazi butchers, and the partisans accepted many in their combat ranks. Some 200,000 Polish Jews, or 40 percent of those rescued from the Nazi murderers, found refuge in the Soviet Union." ¹⁰ The Chief Rabbi of the Moscow Synagogue (now deceased) I. Levin in January 1971 stated: "I am grateful to our Soviet nation which did so much good for my people both in peacetime and during the period of the severe hardships which befell them during the years of World War II. The enemy captured city after city, but during this time the Soviet government found the ways and means to send hundreds of thousands of Jews deep into the rear." ¹¹

The anti-Semitic genocide of the Nazis was selective and, so to speak, class. This is proven by Nazi documents. Thus, the circular of the Chief of Security Police and SD, the SS Muller, No 229793 of 16 December 1942 on the shipping of Jews from Germany and Poland to death concentration camps states that evacuation should be organized "only for those Jews who do not have any particular ties and acquaintances and do not have high decorations." ¹²

Naturally, the well-off Jews were primarily in the category of those not to be "selected." There was the well-known fact that the Nazis without obstacle released one of the members of the Vienesese Rothschilds in occupied Austria and "exiled" him to Switzerland.

Since the joint efforts of the Nazis and Zionists to activate Jewish emigration from Germany produced very meager results in 1933-1937, the Nazis intensified their anti-Semitic actions in the Third Reich. The most important of these was the pogrom conducted by the Nazis during the night of 10 November 1938 (the "night of broken glass"). It was caused supposedly by the murder of a Nazi diplomat by a Jewish terrorist in France. As was pointed out by the Israeli Prosecutor General Hausner in the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem, thousands of Jews were put in concentration camps. "This was the first time when the Nazis simultaneously arrested a large number of Jews and threw them into concentration camps," he said. ¹³

As a result of the "night of broken glass," Jewish emigration from the Reich increased.¹⁴ Moreover, as was announced on 9 November 1976 by the Israeli newspaper JERUSALEM POST which in the given instance cannot be accused of prejudice, of the 90,000 Jews arrested that night, a "majority was later on released under the condition that they immediately leave Germany."

From 1938, Jewish emigration from Germany began to be carried out with active assistance and financial aid from the Nazi governmental services including the SS and Gestapo. At a meeting of the Commission for the Imperial Center of Jewish Emigration, on 11 February 1939, the chief of the Security Service (SD) Heidrich demanded "continuing to further speed up Jewish emigration by all available means." Here he referred to Hitler's instructions to continue emigration from Germany (primarily to Palestine) by every possible means.¹⁵

A number of documents from Nazi Germany in 1937-1938 state that the Reichsbank assigned money for Jewish emigration. This was done in the aim of creating a pro-Nazi Jewish state in Palestine. Jewish emigration from Germany was carried out by the Nazi institutions and the services of the SS and SD in close contact with the German Zionist organization, the Jewish Agency for Palestine and other Zionist organizations in accord with the transfer agreement of 23 August 1933. This was in effect right up until 1939 (this agreement regulated the property arrangements for German Jews leaving for Palestine).

Facts refute the myth of Zionist propaganda that "the world turned its back on the Jews condemned to destruction." A majority of the states did not close their doors to the refugees from Central Europe. For example, the American historian M. Dimond in his book "Jews, God and History" writes: "The Finnish and Scandinavian nations merited the gratitude of the world. Under the very nose of the Quisling government, Norwegians helped a majority of the Jews escape into Sweden."¹⁶ At the same time, the leadership of the WZO was hostile by attempts by certain bourgeois leaders (for example, the U.S. President Roosevelt) at the World Conference on Refugee Problems (1938) to increase the immigration quota for Jews.

Characteristically, the governments of those nations where the Zionist "movement" (for example, the United States) was the most influential was most against the admission of Jews. The civil rights lawyer M. Ernst has pointed out that "Zionists sabotaged the plan of President Roosevelt to save 500,000 persons from Nazi repression by granting them political asylum."¹⁷

The Jewish bourgeoisie in Europe, America and Australia did not provide financial aid to the Jewish victims of Naziism while the Zionist "organizers" of Jewish emigration from Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia chose only young persons fit for military service to be sent to Palestine, not allowing the parents to travel with them.¹⁸

The Zionist leaders did not permit participation of broad Jewish masses in the anti-Hitler partisan movement on Nazi-occupied territories. Thus, one of the prominent Zionists E. Livne stated: "If we (the Zionists) saw our basic task in rescuing the maximum number of Jews, then we would have been forced to cooperate with the partisans.... If we had contacted the partisan bases, then we would have saved many."¹⁹

The main goal in Zionist policy during the years of World War II was to prevent the Jews from saving themselves and to fight against fascism with weapons in hand. And hence to cause the maximum destruction of them by the Nazis with far-reaching political aims. The Soviet critic of Zionism Yu. Ivanov (now deceased) with full justification has written on this: "The policy of the Zionist leaders was...to create conditions which would help the process of Jewish persecution in Germany go as far as possible and at the same time to organize after the fact noisy protests in the aim of acquiring political and other capital."²⁰

Speculation on the Jewish victims of Naziism in 1947 helped the Zionists put pressure on the representatives of the UN members and the world community when it was a question of dividing Palestine into a Jewish and Arab state. Subsequently, the prominent Zionist leader, N. Goldman, cynically stated: "I doubt that without the terrible destruction of Jews a majority in the UN would have voted in favor of the creation of the Jewish state."²¹

At present, the playing upon the corpses of millions is employed by the ruling Israeli circles and by all Zionist organizations to justify the militarization of Israel and to lend validity to the aggressive course of its government and likewise terroristic actions by the Zionist pro-fascist organizations like the Jewish Defense League.

During the years of World War II, a policy aimed at assisting in the Nazi destruction of European Jewry was carried out not only by individual Zionist leaders but also by prominent heads of international Zionism, primarily the leaders of the WZO, the Jewish Agency, the United Jewish Appeal and other leading Zionist organizations. This is pointed out by the Rabbi Moshe Shonfeld in his book "The Victims of the Holocaust Accuse. Documents and Evidence on Jewish War Crimes" (New York, 1977, pp 18-23). "The Jewish leaders in occupied and free nations were to an equal degree allies of Hitler," writes Shonfeld. He names the leading representatives in the leadership of international Zionism of those times including Chaim Weizman, Moshe Sharett, Naum Goldman, David Ben-Gurion and many other "Zionist Quislings" and "European war criminals" who for the sake of creating a "Jewish state" were ready to betray and did betray millions of Jews.

On 10 November 1975, the UN General Assembly at its 30th Session by a majority of votes adopted a resolution which labeled Zionism as a form of racism and racial discrimination.²² But such a label would also be completely valid for Zionism in the 1930's and 1940's, when racism, chauvinism and expansionism in the political practices of Zionism became that basis on which cooperation between the Zionists and fascists was founded.

As was pointed out in February 1982 at the Extraordinary Special Session of the UN General Assembly on the question of the annexation of the Golan Heights by Israel, "the Near East is becoming the main center of international tension in the world."²³ All the blame for this situation rests on Israel and its overseas protector, the United States. With the connivance of the White House, Tel-Aviv has moved from a policy of verbal threats and political sabotage to a policy of permanent aggression employing all branches of troops, including bomber aviation, and is attacking targets hundreds of kilometers from Israel. The

aggressive nature of the Zionist state has turned it into a source of threat throughout the world. Understandably, a struggle against Zionism at the same time means a struggle for peace in our world.

The cooperation between the organizations of international Zionism and fascism during the years of World War II is explained by the commonness of their class essence and by hate for the antiimperialist workers movement and socialism. Zionism is an off-shoot of imperialism and protects the interests of the upper monopolistic bourgeoisie (primarily Jewish). It has made a maximum of effort to conceal the facts of the alliance with fascism in the past. But it is impossible to change history. Moreover, the laws of class unity at present impel the Zionists to collaborate with the most infamous detachments of the world reaction, that is, the revanchists and neo-Nazis, renegades and apologists of the Fuhrer. The Union of Former Silesians in Israel, the Union of Former Inhabitants of Wroclaw and Silesia and the Union of Central European Jews which were founded in Israel established close ties with the West German revanchists and neo-Nazis.

Millions of people, including Jews, made their noble contribution to the defeat of Naziism. With weapons in hand they fought against the fascists in the international brigades in Spain. The fighters against fascism from the Minsk Ghetto won fame for their numerous heroic feats. The revolt of the heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto who were doomed by the Zionists to struggle in isolation from the Polish Resistance Movement will always remain in the memory of people. Hundreds of thousands of Jews along with the peoples of the nations of which they were citizens fought against fascism both in the armies of the Allied states and in partisan detachments as well as in the Red Army units.²⁴ But the Zionist partners of the Nazis played no part in this sacred cause. Along with the Nazis they bear responsibility for the destruction of the Jews in Europe in 1941-1945. The blood of the victims is on their hands and on their conscience.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ "Materialy XXVI s"yezda KPSS" [Materials of the 26th CPSU Congress], Moscow, Politizdat, 1981, p 20.
- ² Quoted from: ZION (Tel-Aviv), January 1978, p 13.
- ³ H. Künrich, "Der KZ-Statt," Berlin, 1960, p 77.
- ⁴ "Encyclopedia of Zionism and Israel," New York, 1971, pp 437, 537-538.
- ⁵ From the concentration camps in Germany, Austria and Italy, Soviet and Allied troops liberated 100,000 Jews.
- ⁶ G. Smolyar, "Mstiteli getto" [The Avengers of the Ghetto], Minsk, Belarus', 1947, pp 25, 75.
- ⁷ See, for example, SOVIETISCH HEIMLAND, No 10, 1979, p 1.
- ⁸ Yuriy Ivanov, "Ostorozhno: sionizm!" [Careful: Zionism!], Moscow, Politizdat, 1971, p 89.

- 9 R. M. Brodskiy and Yu. A. Shul'meyster, "Sionizm--orudiye reaktsii" [Zionism--A Weapon of the Reaction], Lvov, Kamenyar, 1976, p 104.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 SOVIETISCH HEIMLAND, No 2, 1971, p 21.
- 12 See "SS v deystvii. Dokumenty o prestupleniyakh SS" [The SS in Action. Documents on the SS Crimes], Moscow, Izd-vo inostrannoy literatury, 1960, p 143.
- 13 Kimche, "Eichmann and the Selection of Pioneers"; in the book by W. Khalidi (editor) "From Haven to Conquest. Readings in Zionism and the Palestine Problem until 1948," Beirut, 1971, p 439.
- 14 See S. Rosenne (editor), "Six Million Accusers. Israel's Case against Eichmann," Jerusalem, 1961, p 67.
- 15 "Akten zur Deutschen Auswärtigen Politik 1918-1945," Series D, Baden-Baden, 1955, pp 648-649, 661.
- 16 M. Dimond, "Jews, God and History," New York, 1962, p 386.
- 17 S. Krylov, "Taynoye oruzhiye sionizma" [The Secret Weapon of Zionism], Voenizdat, 1972, pp 28-30.
- 18 M. Shonfeld, "The Holocaust Victims Accuse. Documents and Testimony on Jewish War Criminals," New York, 1977, p 24.
- 19 See Yuriy Ivanov, op. cit., p 90.
- 20 Ibid., p 90.
- 21 N. Goldmann, "Ou va Israel?", Paris, 1975, p 23.
- 22 For the full text of this resolution see: "Sionizm--pravda i vymysly" [Zionism--Truth and Fabrications], Moscow, Progress, 1978, pp 243-244.
- 23 PRAVDA, 2 February 1982.
- 24 For details on the involvement of the European Jewish population in the struggle against fascism, see L. Korneyev, "Vragi mira i progressa" [The Enemies of Peace and Progress], Moscow, Pravda, 1978, pp 28-31.

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SOVIET MILITARY LEADERSHIP: IMPROVEMENTS MADE BETWEEN 1929-1939

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[Article published under the heading "Scientific Reports and Information" by Candidate of Historical Sciences Col V. Danilov: "Improving the System of Central Military Leadership Bodies in 1929-1939"*]

[Text] In the history of the organizational development of the Soviet Armed Forces the period from the end of the 1920's until the start of World War II (September 1939) holds a special place as during this period, under the leadership of the Communist Party, technical reconstruction, the organizational strengthening of the Army and Navy and a transition to a cadre [professional] system of organizational development for the RKKA [Worker-Peasant Red Army] were carried out. All of this was caused by the need for further strengthening USSR defenses in line with the increased militarism in the capitalist nations and the growing threat of a military attack on the USSR. As a result of the measures carried out by the party in the area of military organizational development, as was pointed out by the VKP(b) [All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik)] Central Committee in 1938, "the Red Army has been completely renewed. In terms of the quantity and quality of weapons, the organizational structure and the combat training of the personnel, it has become a first-rate army the serious strength of which our enemies are forced to consider."¹

* The literature takes up only individual aspects of the reorganization of the central bodies of Soviet military leadership in 1929-1939 (see "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945" [The History of World War II of 1939-1945], Vols 1, 2, Voenizdat, 1973-1974; "Sovetskaya Voyennaya Entsiklopediya" [Soviet Military Encyclopedia], Vols 1-8, Voenizdat, 1976-1980; "50 let Voruzhennykh Sil SSSR" [50 Years of the Soviet Armed Forces], Voenizdat, 1968; "KPSS i stroitel'stvo Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil" [The CPSU and the Organizational Development of the Soviet Armed Forces], Voenizdat, 1976; "Sovetskiye Vooruzhennyye Sily. Istoriya stroitel'stva" [The Soviet Armed Forces. The History of Organizational Development], Voenizdat, 1978 and others). In the given article the improving of the system of central military bodies, chiefly their structure and functions, is viewed as an independent problem.

The creation of a cadre army and its technical reconstruction were accompanied by a further improvement in the military control bodies. Here the aim was pursued of strengthening centralization in the leadership of the Armed Forces, forming special bodies which would be in charge of the questions of rearming the Army and Navy, more clearly defining the range of functional duties for the central bodies, raising their competence and responsibility and so forth. Thus, on 20 June 1934, the USSR TsIK [Central Executive Committee] adopted a decree on abolishing the USSR Revvoyensovet [Revolutionary Military Council] which was the collegium of the People's Commissariat for Military and Naval Affairs and renaming the People's Commissariat for Military and Naval Affairs the USSR People's Commissariat of Defense [NKO]. K. Ye. Voroshilov (from November 1935, Marshal of the Soviet Union) became the USSR People's Commissar of Defense; prior to this he had been the People's Commissar for Military and Naval Affairs. The chief of the Political Directorate Ya. B. Gamarnik (from November 1935, Army Commissar 1st Rank) and the RKKA Chief of Weapons M. N. Tukhachevskiy (from November 1935, Marshal of the Soviet Union) were appointed deputy people's commissars of defense.

Under the NKO in November 1934, a military council was set up as a consultative body. Four years later, on 13 March 1938, along with the already existing Military Council, by a decree of the USSR SNK [Council of People's Commissars] and the VKP(b) Central Committee, under the NKO the Main Military Council of the RKKA was formed consisting of K. Ye. Voroshilov (chairman), I. V. Stalin, I. F. Fed'ko, L. Z. Mekhlis, Ye. A. Shchadenko, B. M. Shaposhnikov, V. K. Blyukher, S. M. Budenny and G. I. Kulik. On 22 March of the same year, additions were made to it: A. D. Loktionov (in his absence, Ya. V. Smushkevich replaced him), D. G. Pavlov (in his absence, P. S. Alliluyev replaced him), and G. K. Savchenko (in the case of absence of G. I. Kulik).³ The Main Military Council bore full responsibility to the party Central Committee and the Soviet government for the unswerving carrying out of directives relating to the elaboration and implementation of plans to strengthen national defense, mobilizational readiness, the technical equipping of the army, military instruction and indoctrination of the personnel. The decisions of the Main Military Council were carried out by orders of the people's commissar.

In the aim of unifying the efforts of all the people's commissariats and the other state bodies and coordinating their activities on the questions of national defense, on 27 April 1937, by a decree of the VKP(b) Central Committee, a unified body, the Defense Committee under the USSR SNK was formed (instead of the previously existing Defense Commission and the Labor and Defense Council). It was entrusted with carrying out the tasks related to strengthening the defense capability of the USSR and raising its military potential. Periodically commissions were organized under the Defense committee for solving various defense problems. Thus, on 31 January 1938, a Permanent Military Industry Commission was established and this was concerned with the questions of mobilizing and preparing all industry for carrying out the plans and quotas to produce weapons for the Soviet Army and Navy. The views on the organization of the High Command were determined by the particular features of a future war. In comparison with the 1920's, a new feature in this area was the further strengthening of centralized leadership over the training and combat activities of the Armed Forces (in the event of war). At that time it was felt that with the outbreak of military operations, the commander-in-chief would automatically become the people's commissar of defense and his basic working bodies would be

the General Staff and the central directorates. Here all the central bodies should not be subjected to a substantial reorganization with the start of a war.

As before, primary significance was given to the development and strengthening of the General Staff (prior to September 1935, the RKKA Staff). Its work was improved primarily in the following areas: operational planning, direction over the operational training of the higher command personnel and staffs, logistical support for the troops, planning industrial orders for military equipment and weapons, preparing and carrying out mobilizational measures and so forth. By the start of World War II, the General Staff included the following directorates: operations, mobilization-organization, military lines of communications, military topographic service as well as a number of departments (weapons, for planning supply, fortified areas, motor transport and dirt roads, military history and others).⁴

Such a make-up of the directorates and departments made it possible for the General Staff to carry out the tasks entrusted to it. The General Staff (RKKA Staff) was headed during the described period by the Army Commander 1st Rank (from 7 May 1940, Mar SU) B. M. Shaposhnikov (from May 1928 through June 1931 and later from June 1937 through August 1940), and from June 1931 through June 1937, A. I. Yegorov (from 20 November 1935, Mar SU).

The leadership bodies of the branches of troops and services underwent significant organizational changes.⁵ This was expressed, in the first place, by their further specialization, by the creation of new central and district (army) control bodies for them; secondly, in a corresponding increase in the number of structural subdivisions in them; thirdly, in the introduction of the positions of chiefs of the branches of troops with the corresponding control bodies; fourthly, in the clarification of the functions and structure of the previously existing command bodies of the branches of troops. Particular attention was given to the leadership of the Navy and Air Forces.

With the increased scale of naval construction in the capitalist nations and in line with the necessity of having a correspondingly strong fleet for defending the sea frontiers of the USSR, on 30 December 1937, the TsIK and SNK adopted a decree on forming the USSR People's Commissariat of the Navy [NK VMF]. At that same time, the operational leadership bodies of the NK VMF were created, namely the Main Naval Staff and the Political Directorate with the rights of a naval department of the party's Central Committee and so forth. On 8 April 1938, in accord with a decision of the Politburo of the VKP(b) Central Committee, under the NK VMF the Main Military Council of the Navy was formed with a membership of P. A. Smirnov (chairman), A. A. Zhdanov, P. I. Smirnov-Svetlovskiy, I. S. Isakov, L. M. Galler, M. R. Shaposhnikov, N. G. Kuznetsov, G. I. Levchenko and I. S. Mushnov.⁶ On the questions of the operational use of naval forces, the NK VMF was guided by the general operational and mobilizational plans worked out by the RKKA General Staff. Thus, the system of naval leadership was improved in accord with the tasks stemming from the overall plan for the combat employment of the Armed Forces for national defense. The NK VMF was consecutively headed by: Army Commissar 1st Rank P. A. Smirnov (from December 1937), Army Commander 1st Rank M. P. Frinovskiy (from August 1938) and Fleet Flag Officer 2d Rank N. G. Kuznetsov (from April 1939).

In accord with the strategic and operational-tactical views on the combat employment of aviation, the command and control of the Air Forces were improved. From January 1937, the chief of the air forces simultaneously became the deputy people's commissar of defense for the Air Forces. Under him were the troop air formations in terms of operational, tactical and all types of special training, organization, mobilization and logistical support and weapons as well as the directorates (schools, technical supply, aviation weapons and so forth), departments and inspectors. Under the chief of the Air Forces, the staff of the RKKA Air Forces was organized as a body for operational leadership.⁷ Such a strengthening of the powers of the Air Force's chief as well as the strengthening of the control bodies were an important factor in improving the leadership of the Air Forces.

Technical reconstruction brought about the creation of a number of new leadership bodies in the central apparatus. On 13 November 1929, the Directorate for Mechanization and Motorization of the RKKA was created (in the autumn of 1934, it was renamed the Motor Vehicle and Armored Directorate). This was concerned with the questions of special training for the personnel of the motor vehicle and armored troops, the supply of the army with combat and transport vehicles and special equipment and so forth.⁸

The significant growth in the air forces and weapons in the armies of the probable enemies, their growing capability of making a massed strike against strategically important objectives necessitated in May 1932 the separating of a Air Defense Directorate from the RKKA Staff and turning it into an independent RKKA Air Defense Directorate directly under the USSR Revvoyensovet.⁹

The development of air and landing combat equipment was the material base for forming a new branch of troops, the airborne. Leadership over them on special questions was initially provided by the chief of the Airborne Service and from the autumn of 1934, by the Paratrooper and Aerostat Department which in organizational terms was part of the RKKA Air Forces Directorate.¹⁰

With the beginning of the 1930's, one could clearly trace a tendency to bring together the command and supply functions in the control of the artillery, chemical, engineer and signals troops. In January 1932, the position of RKKA chief of engineers was introduced, in May, the RKKA chief of chemical troops and in December 1935 the RKKA chief of artillery.

On 18 November 1929, in the aim of "the best and most rapid resolution to the problem of the technical rearming of the RKKA which is," as was pointed out by the USSR Revvoyensovet, "the basic task in the five-year plan for the organizational development of the Armed Forces."¹¹ The following changes were introduced into the structure of the central apparatus: in the first place, the position was established of the RKKA chief of weapons to whom was entrusted responsibility and leadership over all the questions of artillery, chemical warfare and technical support (including the Air Forces, the motorized and mechanized troops, while for the Navy he assumed inspector functions); secondly, the RKKA Supply Directorate was broken up. The military housekeeping and military construction directorates as well as the Central Military Financial Directorate were put under the first deputy people's commissar. The artillery, military-chemical and military-technical directorates were shifted to the chief of

weapons. The Military Scientific Research Committee under the USSR Revvoyensovet was also placed under him.¹²

In April 1936, the position of chief of weapons was abolished and his functions were concentrated at the RKKA Main Directorate for Weapons and Technical Supply. A year later, in July 1937, this was reorganized in the following manner. The signals and technical directorates were merged into one, the RKKA Signals Directorate. A number of directorates (artillery, motor vehicle-armored, engineer, signals and chemical) were transferred directly under the people's commissar of defense. In August 1935, the Military Housekeeping Directorate was split into two bodies under the people's commissar: the RKKA Directorate for Transport and Clothing Supply and the RKKA Directorate for Food Supply.¹³ The Directorate for Fuel Supply which was created in February 1936 became the central body of the NKO for supplying the army in peacetime and wartime with all types of fuel, oils, fueling equipment and materiel for organizing the head dumps.¹⁴

Leadership over the training, recruitment and placement of command personnel was improved. This was aided by the creation of the RKKA Directorate for Military Schools which was in charge of the land military schools and the Directorate for RKKA Leadership which was concerned with the recruitment of personnel. In March 1938, in the place of the disbanded Directorate of Military Schools, an Inspectorate for Military Schools was created at the center and in the districts (Leningrad, Belorussian, Moscow and Caucasus military districts), the position of deputy commander for military schools was introduced. In following this, the military schools were put under the directorates in their specialty: the directorate of combat training had all infantry schools, the directorate of the artillery chief had the artillery and electrical engineering schools, the motor vehicle and armored directorate had the motor vehicle and armored schools and so forth.¹⁵

The technical rearming of the army raised many new questions related to mastering the military equipment and weapons, to the methods of their use, the field skills of the personnel and so forth. Because of this, in April 1936, the Combat Training Department was split off from the General Staff and turned into the independent RKKA Combat Training Directorate. It was under the then Deputy People's Commissar of Defense, Mar SU M. M. Tukhachevskiy. Also under him were the inspectors of the infantry, cavalry, artillery, higher schools, physical training and sports and for the military work of the Osoaviakhim [Society for Assisting Defense and Aviation-Chemical Construction of the USSR].¹⁶

Great attention was given to improving the central political bodies of the Army and Navy. This was expressed in the strengthening of leadership over party political work primarily in the Navy, Air Forces, motor vehicle-armored troops and artillery. In June 1937, the position of military commissars was introduced on the General Staff and the main and central NKO directorates, and two positions of military council members on each staff of the Navy and Air Forces directorates.¹⁷ In certain subdivisions of the central apparatus, political sectors were established (or positions of assistants for political affairs, released party bureau secretaries and inspectors). In the aim of strengthening leadership over party political work in the troops, in the RKKA Political Directorate from May 1938 there began functioning the Department for Political Work

in the Air Defense Units and the Department for Political Work in the Motorized and Mechanized Units and Artillery; from July 1938, there was the Department for Culture and Propaganda.¹⁸ For improving leadership over political indoctrination of the Komsomol members and for promoting the young political cadres from them, in January 1938, within the RKKA Political Directorate a department for work among Komsomol members was organized and in the districts and armies the position of assistant chiefs of the political directorates for Komsomol work was introduced.¹⁹

In direct relation to the organizational improvement in the structure of Armed Forces leadership, the work style of the central bodies was also improved on a basis of the Leninist principles: party leadership over military organizational development, a unity of political and military leadership, centralism, scientificness, competence, professionalism, a check on execution and others. "The machinery of Soviet administration," pointed out V. I. Lenin, "should operate precisely, honestly and quickly. Not only the interests of private parties suffer from its laxness, but the entire cause of administration assumes a nebulous, spectral nature."^{19a} In light of Lenin's demands as well as the decisions of the Communist Party and the Soviet government, the basic areas in improving the work style of the central apparatus in the 1930's were: a precise elucidation of the functions of each body, a clear delimitation of the rights and duties of the superiors and executors; a reduction in the number of intermediate levels between the directive bodies and executors; bringing the number of technical workers (clerks, typists, draftsmen, statisticians and others) up to the required standard and providing them with the necessary office equipment. Of great importance in the area of improving the work style was also the allocation of leadership functions between the people's commissar, his deputies and the chief of the General Staff and personal responsibility for the activities of the various main and central directorates.

An analysis of the improvement in the central bodies of the Soviet Armed Forces in 1929-1939 makes it possible to draw certain conclusions and generalizations. In the first place, among the factors determining the development of the central apparatus at that time the crucial ones were the technical reconstruction of the Army and Navy and the conversion to a cadre system for the organizational development of the Armed Forces. The improvement in the central bodies was directly tied to the development of Soviet military art and the scientific forecasting of the nature of a future war which the most aggressive imperialist states were preparing to start.

Secondly, the reorganization in the area of military leadership was expressed in a further breaking up of the structure and functions of the central bodies and in their narrower specialization. Under these conditions the role of the General Staff increased as the basic directive and working body of the people's commissar of defense (the High Command) both in the system of the central apparatus of the NKO and in the system of the Armed Forces as a whole.

Thirdly, the structure of the political bodies and party organizations in the central directorates was improved and their role was increased in indoctrinating the personal responsibility of command personnel for the assigned job and for mastering the new military equipment and weapons and the new methods of armed combat.

The structure and functions of the central military leadership bodies which had come into being by the start of World War II (September 1939) basically met the tasks of further strengthening the Soviet Armed Forces and the development level of military affairs. They ensured the carrying out of the Communist Party's military policy, the steady control of the troops and the maintaining of them in constant combat readiness.

A creative analysis of past experience and its use under present-day conditions in the organizational development of the central bodies will be an important contribution to strengthening the defense might of the nation and its Armed Forces as the 26th CPSU Congress so requires.²⁰

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ "KPSS o Vooruzhennykh Silakh Sovetskogo Soyuza. Dokumenty. 1917-1968" [The CPSU on the Soviet Armed Forces. Documents. 1917-1968], Voenizdat, 1969, p 290.
- ² [Not in text.]
- ³ TsGASA [Central State Archives of the Soviet Army], folio 4, inv. 15, file 85, sheet 76. The role of the Military Council under the NKO gradually declined and it was abolished by a decree of the USSR SNK of 6 November 1940 (TsGASA, folio 4, inv. 3, file 3314, sheet 458).
- ⁴ TsGASA, folio 4, inv. 3, file 3312, sheet 131 verso.
- ⁵ In the 1930's, the Soviet Armed Forces were divided into six basic branches of troops: infantry, cavalry, artillery, motorized-mechanized troops, aviation, naval forces as well as into seven auxiliary branches of troops and services: chemical, engineer, signals, air defense, military lines of communications, sanitary and veterinary. At that time, the airborne troops began to be formed.
- ⁶ TsGA VMF [Central State Archives of the Navy], folio 1678, file 20, sheets 61-62. The other dates given in certain publications for the formation of the Navy Main Military Council must be considered erroneous: 21 April ("Partiya i armiya" [The Party and Army], Moscow, Politizdat, 1977, p 374, 23 April ("Istoriya Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny 1941-1945," Vol 1, Voenizdat, 1960, p 488); 13 March 1938 ("Sovetskiye Vooruzhennyye Sily: istoriya stroitel'stva," p 504). Also not corresponding to the truth is the fact, as individual authors assert, that the Navy Main Military Council was established under the USSR NKO ("Boyevoy put' Sovetskogo Voenno-Morskogo Flota" [The Campaign Record of the Soviet Navy], Voenizdat, 1974, p 145).
- ⁷ TsGASA, folio 4, inv. 15, file 82, sheets 42-44.
- ⁸ Ibid., file 72, sheets 363-365.
- ⁹ Ibid., sheets 364-365 verso; "Voyska protivovozdushnoy oborony strany" [The National Air Defense Troops], Voenizdat, 1969, pp 43-45.

- ¹⁰ TsGASA, folio 4, inv. 15, file 72, sheet 363.
- ¹¹ Ibid., folio 3391, inv. 1, file 12, sheet 38.
- ¹² Ibid.
- ¹³ Ibid., folio 4, inv. 4, file 3300, sheets 302 verso-306.
- ¹⁴ Ibid., inv. 3, file 3302, sheet 9.
- ¹⁵ Ibid., inv. 15, file 85, sheet 77.
- ¹⁶ Ibid., inv. 3, file 3302, sheets 42-43. Up to January 1931, leadership over combat training was provided by the RKKA Staff and then an independent combat training directorate was organized, and in the autumn of 1934, the leadership of combat training was again concentrated on the RKKA Staff (up to April 1936).
- ¹⁷ TsGASA, folio 4, inv. 15, file 82, sheets 212, 214.
- ¹⁸ Ibid., inv. 3, file 3307, sheets 72, 88, 154.
- ¹⁹ Ibid., inv. 15, file 86, sheet 13. Of important significance was the creation in May 1937 of the military councils of the districts (fleets, armies) consisting of the commander and two military council members. They bore complete responsibility for the political-moral state, constant combat and mobilizational readiness of the troop units and installations.
- ^{19a} "Leninskiy sbornik" [The Leninist Collection], XXXIV, Moscow, Politizdat, 1942, p 429.
- ²⁰ "Materialy XXVI s"yezda KPSS" [Materials of the 26th CPSU Congress], Moscow, Politizdat, 1981, p 66.

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REVIEW OF BOOK ABOUT HIGHER SCHOOLS DURING WARTIME

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[Review by Prof, Doctor of Historical Sciences, Lt Gen Ye. Nikitin of the book "Sovetskaya vysshaya shkola v gody Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny" (The Soviet Higher School During the Years of the Great Patriotic War), edited by F. B. Komal, et al., Moscow, Vyyshaya shkola, 1980, 232 pages]

[Text] The Vyyshaya Shkola Izdatel'stvo has published a collective work edited by Prof F. B. Komal and devoted to the difficult path of the Soviet higher school on the eve of and during the Great Patriotic War. On the basis of numerous new documentary materials, it discloses the measures undertaken by the party and government to carry out the decisions of the 18th VKP(b) [All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik)] Congress on further improving and raising the quality of education in the nation. In the 1940-1941 academic year, the USSR had 817 institutions of higher learning with 811,700 students. This significantly exceeded their number envisaged in the Third Five-Year Plan (650,000 persons). At the same time, extensive work was being carried out to train skilled pedagogical personnel and reorganize the entire educational process in the aim of improving the quality of instruction and indoctrination for the students.

On the basis of analyzing numerous materials, the authors have concluded that the Soviet higher school by the start of the Great Patriotic War to a significant degree supplied the basic sectors of the national economy with specialists having a higher education. The number of instructors and scientific workers grew.

Of significant interest are the chapters in the book devoted to the reorganization of the higher school under wartime conditions and the aid of the VUZes to the front. The VUZ collectives reorganized their work in terms of wartime conditions and were able to solve the problem of replacing the faculty, graduate students and student body who were mobilized or volunteered for the Armed Forces and create conditions for the functioning of graduate studies, the forming of instructor personnel and ensuring the planned number of students.

The higher school scientists subordinated all their practical activities to rapidly creating a smoothly-running military economy and to developing new

models of weapons and ammunition and modernizing those already in the troops. They did a great deal to solve the problem of mobilizing the nation's resources, replacing scarce materials with local raw products, introducing effective medicines for treating wounded soldiers, for working out the ways to increase the yield of agricultural crops and livestock productivity and for utilizing scientific achievements to fight the enemy.

In widely drawing on archival sources, the authors disclose the picture of the intense work carried out by the VUZes to train personnel and provide aid to the national economy.

The reviewed work reflects the patriotism of the faculty and the students, it gives noble examples of heroism and courage on the battlefields and shows the political and labor activities of the VUZ collectives in carrying out the tasks of achieving victory in the war. Ideological indoctrination work among the student youth was subordinate to indoctrinating class hate for the Nazi invaders and an ardent feeling of love for one's motherland. A special section of the monograph is devoted to organizing the study of Marxist-Leninist theory in the VUZes and to the forms and content of political indoctrination with the students during nonstudy hours the experience of which is valid today.

The authors of the book rightly emphasize that during the years of the Great Patriotic War, socialism surpassed imperialism not only in the military, political and economic sectors, but also in the area of organizing higher education. The universities, the academies and institutes of the USSR did not halt their activities for a single day during the difficult wartime and provided the national economy with 302,000 specialists with a higher education.

Unfortunately, individual inaccuracies are also encountered in this good publication. Thus, on p 151 it states that Leningrad was finally liberated from the enemy blockade on 27 November 1944. Actually this was carried out as a result of the successful execution of the Leningrad-Novgorod Operation in January-February 1944. Often the numerical materials abundantly employed in the work do not give references to the archival and other official sources.

The reviewed book merits an affirmative judgment. It will provide definite benefit for the faculty in training and indoctrinating the VUZ students in the military and labor traditions of the higher school personnel as shown in the battle against the Nazi invaders during the years of the last war.

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END